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VIDEO

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- Tapes, Discs And Celebrity Picks

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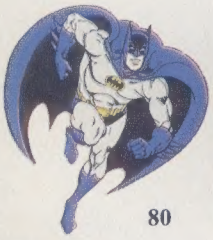

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Cover:
Our gift-wrapped cover celebrates a special five-part guide to the holiday season's best gifts, from slick new personal video components to blockbuster films. Photograph by Jay Brenner, bow by Kid Klip

Video Magazine
Volume XIII
Number 9

Before You Make Your Move, Make Sure Everything Fits.

JVC Compact VideoMovies Are Instantly Compatible With The VHS Deck You Already Own.

So you're ready to make the move from simply watching video to the excitement of actually creating your own. But before you do, be sure you look before you leap. Because not all camcorders give you what you really want — not all camcorders fit together with the video products you already own.

JVC's got a Compact VHS VideoMovie to meet anybody's needs. Lightweight portability. Superb picture quality. Unbelievable performance. Instant playback. We've got it all. But more importantly, when you choose Compact VHS, you get one important plus — a plus that other compact camcorder formats just can't match. It's called compatibility, and it means that the VHS recordings you make with your VideoMovie can also play back instantly on the VHS VCR you already own. There's no fuss and no wiring to worry about. After all, Compact VHS is VHS in a compact package — a smaller version of the same thing.

So before jumping to a conclusion, remember the benefits of JVC Compact VHS VideoMovies. They're the compact camcorders you'll never outgrow.

JVC Makes Recorded History Again.

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Panasonic Video Update

When it comes to camcorders, don't be afraid to think small. Because despite their small size, Panasonic compact camcorders have sophisticated technology you'll find hard to outgrow.

Experience Super VHS

Every detail of Panasonic Super VHS compact camcorders is designed to give you an image with finer detail. From a 330,000-pixel high-resolution CCD imaging chip to a narrow head gap that aids in high-frequency recording. The result is an image with over 400 lines of horizontal resolution.*

Picture Incredible Sound

The Panasonic VHS Hi-Fi camcorder not only creates an incredible picture, its audio specs are spectacular, too. With a dynamic range of more than 90db and frequency response that goes from 20Hz to 20kHz, its sound approaches the quality of a compact disc.

Shoot Like A Pro

Ordinary camcorders produce a rainbow pattern of noise between scenes. All Panasonic compact camcorders have a flying erase head that produces clean, virtually glitch-free edits.

The new Panasonic compact camcorders, the only thing that's small about them is their size.

VHS C

*With compatible monitor-receivers.

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CHANNEL ONE

Arming for a format war

The volatile home video hardware field is arming for another major format war. But this time around it will be fought not only in backroom strategy sessions but on the backlots of Hollywood studios as well.

In the mid-'70s, Sony went to market with Betamax, secure in the knowledge that innovation, quality and utility were enough to ensure a product's success. We all know what happened. Despite the merits of Betamax (still viewed by many video enthusiasts as the best home VCR system), harsh market realities—and some skillful corporate maneuvering—did it in. The VHS forces managed to sign on RCA and its vast retail distribution network. Inevitably, the effects of that move led movie studios and other program suppliers to abandon Beta, establishing VHS as the only viable pre-recorded home video format.

Sony had no say in the matter. Although other forces are at work, the decision to shell out $3.4 billion for Columbia Pictures and its vast movie library reflects a determination not to let it happen again—to take control of its own format destiny. And, no matter how "hands-off" a policy the company adopts toward the U.S. management of Columbia, you can bet future home video releases will also show up on Sony's 8mm format.

As you probably know, Sony is determined to establish 8mm as *the* video format of the future. The firm has already confounded earlier 8mm naysayers by establishing a strong 8mm camcorder foothold in the U.S. and in other world markets. Now, it's putting on a major push to make 8mm the next pre-recorded format of choice.

VHS developer and 8mm arch-rival JVC obviously isn't sitting idly by, and its stragetic thoughts are also turning to the program arena. A determination to establish Super VHS as a major pre-recorded format was instrumental in JVC's decision to enter the U.S. movie business through the formation of Largo Enterprises (with movie producer Lawrence Gordon). And JVC now acknowledges it is studying the possibility of opening the Compact VHS format to software applications and is developing a movie-length two-hour VHS-C cassette.

So the lines for a major format showdown are now being drawn. Given the Hollywood weapons both sides will be using this time around, it should be a heck of a show. Stay tuned.

Art Levis
Editor-in-Chief

BEFORE YOU BUY A COMPACT CAMCORDER, MAKE SURE ITS TAPES CAN PLAY IN YOUR VCR.

Panasonic introduces a compact camcorder that's more than small and lightweight... Its tapes can play in any VHS recorder.

If you're thinking about buying a compact camcorder, you have to think about more than just how compact it is. Especially if you already own one of the 60 million VHS recorders out there. Because some compact camcorders use tapes that won't play in your VHS recorder.

That's why the new Panasonic VHS-C Compact Camcorder is not only small and lightweight, it's VHS compatible. Just slip the VHS-C video tape into its adapter, and you can watch your tapes on any VHS recorder. No need to connect and disconnect like some other compact camcorders. We even supply the adapter.

This Panasonic Compact Camcorder is as compatible with you as it is with your VHS recorder. Everything from focusing to setting the exposure is done for you automatically. It even shoots by the light of one birthday candle.

So when you consider buying a compact camcorder, consider more than its size. If its tapes can't play in your VCR, you might just be considering the wrong camcorder.

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VHS C

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THE WAY WE WERE *	1529262						
RISKY BUSINESS	6033402						
HAMBURGER HILL	4954082						
NORTH TO ALASKA	7310262						
JEWEL OF THE NILE	3571602						
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THE BIG EASY *	6559102	THE BOAT (DAS BOOT) *	1520252	THE SICILIAN	4953092	PROJECT X	3636062
HATARI	4110092	HOOSIERS	6550192	MY LIFE AS A DOG	4391092	DRAGNET	2227032
D.O.A. (1988)	5489092	ALEXANDER THE GREAT	2762042	ROCKY IV	3570462	LOST HORIZON *	1916012
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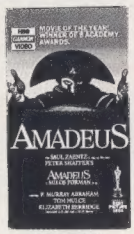

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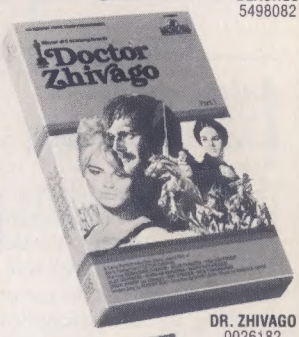

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P76/P82/N23

EDITED BY BRIAN CLARK

FEEDBACK

Asimov's vision

It was most gratifying to read Isaac Asimov's article on the future of video (Sept. '89). It provides a visionary, but balanced view of the changes video will bring about. Asimov's article contributes the broad perspective not often seen—that of video's role in society. Thanks for opening up the discussion of video in this way.

Michael Mascioni
New York, N.Y.

Slick specs fix pix

Christopher Mohr's letter ("Feedback," Oct. '89) correctly observes that it takes two images to create a three dimensional illusion of depth, but he is wrong about the Nuoptix process used for the Super Bowl halftime show. I've experimented with these 3-D eyeglasses and they work well with other shows when there is movement on the screen. The same result can be obtained without the 3-D glasses by squinting your right eye. To all readers who doubt this: Don't knock it until you've tried it.

Elliot Sadoff
Bronx, N.Y.

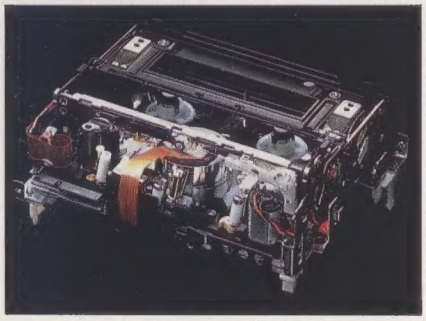
Get it together

I think your magazine is superior to your competitor's in all but one aspect. You can't seem to run two consecutive pages of a review without having to continue the article in the back of the issue, often in columns continued on still more pages. I love your magazine but can't you do something about this type of layout?

Leu Ferrante
Philadelphia, Pa.

For the record

The right-hand caption on page 60 in "Game Wars" (Oct. '89) incorrectly implied that *Basketball Nightmare* and *Dead Angle* were designed for Sega's 16-bit Genesis game system. They go with Sega's eight-bit Master System. See "Gift-Giving Gamesmanship," elsewhere in this issue, for a look at Genesis games.



Mini Mover: Sony's FL Mechanism tape transport weighs only 185 grams, less than 6.5 ounces.

Too light for comfort

Dr. Who fans should be delighted. Sony has managed, according to Murray Slovick in "Camcorders 2000" (Sept. '89), to create what amounts to Dr. Who's TARDIS. It has put its new FL Mechanism transport, which "weighs only 900 grams" into "the CCD-TR5, a full-featured 8mm camcorder that weighs 28 ounces." Getting 900 grams into something that weighs only 794 grams is an achievement worth more than a simple mention. I'm sure NASA would be most interested.

Alan Bronstein
Elkins Park, Pa.

Editor's Note: The transport actually weighs 185 grams, less than a quarter of the camcorder's total weight.

Aye for an Eyes-On

Having just read your review of VHS decks ("Super Shootout," May '89), I am struck by how informative it is and disappointed that JVC declined to participate. These "Eyes-On" tests suggest how much more your publication could offer if it would more strongly emphasize comparative reviews.

James Grout
Mill Valley, Calif.

continued on page 106

Video Magazine welcomes your comments. Please include a phone number, but not a return envelope as the volume of mail does not permit replies. Letters may be edited for clarity and space. Address correspondence to Feedback, Video Magazine, 460 West 34 Street, New York, NY 10001.

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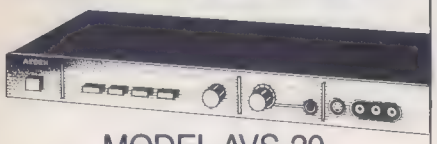

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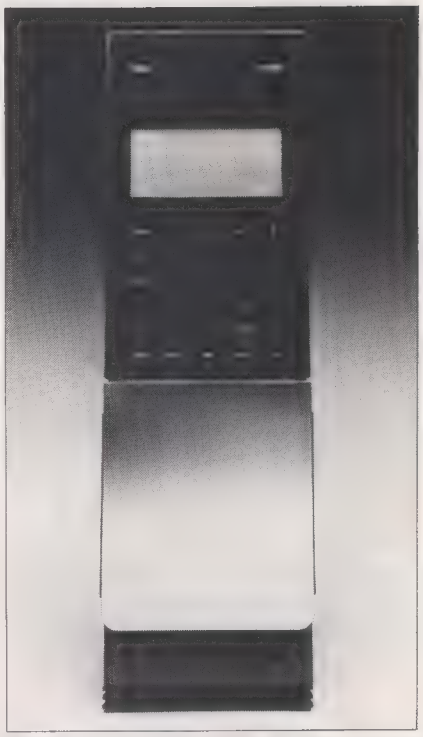
EDITED BY STAN PINKWAS

LATE NEWS

Rewriting the book on remotes

Bang & Olufsen is bringing its unique minimalist sensibilities to remote controls. Its forthcoming Boelink 7000 remote, which runs all B&O audio and video systems, displays no controls at all until it's turned on, and then only those needed for the component being used. If you're taping a television movie, VCR legends appear; if you're watching two football games at once, TV legends appear, and so on. The remote can access about 200 control legends, which can be programmed to respond to specific system configurations.

A tiny motor raises the unit to a comfortable—and programmable—angle, while a touch panel activates the function keys. Instead of plastic, the circuits are housed beneath black glass and polished aluminum and powered by a rechargeable nickel cadmium battery (a backup battery protects against memory loss). Users can even control room lighting with optional attachments. Due early in 1990, the suggested price for this chameleon-like controller is a cool $1,000.



Power Pad: The Beolink 7000 remote shows only the legends needed to run the component in use.

Taking the Compact challenge

With 8mm movies and personal video products coming on strong, JVC is giving "top priority" to developing a Compact VHS cassette that can play for two hours, long enough to hold a feature film, according to a report in *TV Digest*. Such a tape would need to be about four microns thinner than JVC's new TC-30 cassette, which runs for 90 minutes in EP. Can it be done? "I wouldn't care if people said it was impossible," said executive vice president Shizuo Takano, JVC's second-in-command, who's gung-ho for the project.

Fast Scans

Who Ya Gonna Call? NEC, Toshiba and Sony have all begun selling TV sets in Japan with the innovative ghostbusting circuits we recently reported (see "Off the Air," Oct. '89). The sets are compatible with programs in Clearvision, Japan's advanced definition TV system, which some Japanese TV stations recently began broadcasting.

VHS on Deck. Sony's commitment to VHS continues to expand. The company will sell a Super-VHS deck to Japanese consumers by the end of the year and introduce two professional VHS models—the SVO-150 VCR and the SVP-120 player—in the U.S. in December and February.

Coals to Newcastle Dept. Philips Consumer Electronics, which only recently started making TV sets in the U.S., now exports some to Japan. Philips builds the 27-inch sets in Greeneville, Tennessee, and expects its shipments to Japan to increase in the coming year.

The Real Age of Video. Who really likes all those TV sets with built-in VCRs? Mostly people over 55, according to a survey by the NPD Group. Older viewers buy a third of all TV/VCR combinations, significantly more than their share of any other video or audio product. ■

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New Prism IDTV—even if you're not an engineer you can see why its technology is so impressive.

*Based on memory capacity comparisons. TV picture simulated.

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How to camcorder.

Canon makes and grinds the lenses for every Canovision 8 camcorder, including the A1.

Buying a camcorder can be a confusing proposition. There's VHS, VHS-C, SVHS, SVHS-C, 8mm and Hi8. And that's just tape formats—what about features, or price?

Obviously, we think you should consider a Canon Canovision 8 camcorder. But no matter what kind of camcorder you buy, here are some of the questions you should ask before you make a decision.

Who makes it?

The most important thing to remember about a camcorder is that first of all it is a camera. And no one knows cameras better than Canon; for over 50 years we've focused on the technology of capturing your most precious images.

That's why Canon video lenses have been chosen by TV stations across the country for their broadcast cameras. And the same quality we build into every broadcast TV camera lens is also built into every Canon camcorder autofocus power zoom lens—for picture quality that's unsurpassed.

How does it feel in your hands?

Go to a store and pick up any camcorder; hold it in your hands. Then pick up a Canon camcorder. Compare how it feels. Notice how right the Canon feels in your hands, whether you're holding the Dual Action Grip A1, or one of Canon's camcorders designed with our unique 180° FlexiGrip.™

This should be no surprise. Canon's experience making cameras means we know how to make camcorders that are lightweight and easy to use, with the controls right at your fingers.

What kind of features does it offer?

Now that you've got a camcorder in your hands, play with it. Does the camcorder have the features you want that will make it more fun? Canon makes a variety of 8mm camcorders, with

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Features like Canon's unique Multi-Function AF, found on our new E640 and Hi8 H660 models. Multi-Function AF gives you auto framing, which automatically keeps your subject the same size relative to the frame, whether it's moving towards or away from you. Great for action shots. Other Multi-Function AF features include zoom memory and focus memory, so you can concentrate on making great videos instead of how to get the shot.

Every Canon camcorder comes with a wireless remote control.

The E640 (with 8x power zoom lens) and Hi8 H660 (with 6x power zoom lens) also offer a combination character generator/digital superimposer with auto date and time, a 4-mode high-speed shutter (to 1/2000 of a second), record search/review, and a flying erase head.

Every Canon camcorder comes with a wireless remote control; it controls record and zoom functions, so you can get in the picture. It also makes playback directly from the camcorder easy.

All Canon Canovision 8 camcorders are 8mm (either regular or extra resolution Hi8). The reason is simple; we're convinced you get a better picture —and better sound. And because you can play back your tapes directly from the camcorder it's easy to make copies for friends and family members on whatever format VCR you choose.

For additional information, circle No. 7 on Reader Service Card.

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EDITED BY IRA ROBBINS

GAZETTE

Passing the Flame: Dennis Quaid (seated) and Jerry Lee Lewis ignite *Great Balls of Fire* (inset).

Dennis Quaid stokes rock's Fire

It's strange enough seeing a familiar actor like Dennis Quaid portraying someone as well known as Jerry Lee Lewis. But when the star of *Great Balls of Fire* turns up in a Memphis hotel to talk about his movie, months after the shooting, with the same blond dye job, period shoes and the remnants of an artificial Southern accent, the line between reality and acting blurs.

Although viewers might not realize it from Quaid's extravagant caricature of one of the 1950s' greatest white rock'n'rollers, Quaid took the role *very* seriously. "I had a responsibility to Jerry Lee Lewis, and I needed his blessing. Before we started I told him if I can get it close to your heart then I'll be able to sleep at night.

"You can't invent a character like Jerry Lee Lewis," Quaid observes. "It's certainly more fun than playing Pat Boone." This isn't Quaid's first real-life role. "Playing Gordo Cooper in *The Right Stuff* was a gas. He was my favorite astronaut when I was a kid," Quaid recalls. "I prefer playing real people. I try to get to the truth of a person then fictionalize it."

And there lies one of the problems with *Great Balls of Fire*, which fizzled theatrically this summer. The film, which primarily addresses Lewis' career from 1956 to 1958, is less a musical docudrama than a stylized love story about his marriage to a 13-year-old second cousin, Myra Gail Brown. By purchasing the rights to *Great Balls of Fire*, Myra's 1982 memoir (republished this year as a tie-in), the filmmakers were able to portray some of the people actually involved in Lewis' life, according to producer Adam Fields.

But director Jim McBride was concerned with making an entertaining film, not a documentary. He conceived it as a fantasy and several scenes, like

a dance number on the steps of Myra's school that resembles the opening of *High School Confidential* (a 1958 movie in which Lewis appeared), bear this out. In any case, the film's fabricated facts and improbable chronology only magnify Quaid's bizarre performance.

Still, if Jerry Lee Lewis "didn't like something I worked as hard as I could to change it," Quaid recalls. "This is the only movie I've ever done where I'd like to do Part Two. Jerry Lee's life is so rich, the whole thing needs to be done." In the meantime, Quaid's pursuing his own musical career. He has a band, a contract with Capitol Records, a forthcoming album and the memory of working with the one and only Killer. "The musical education I got from him is invaluable. He had his effect on me."

—Ira Robbins

Coneheads: Richard Pryor (left) and Gene Wilder are reunited in *Seen No Evil, Speak No Evil.*

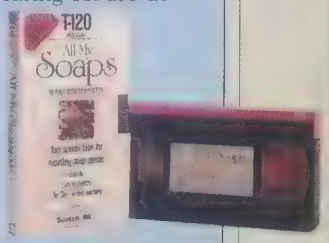
Blind, deaf and far from dumb

Having teamed up in *Silver Streak* (1976) and *Stir Crazy* (1980), comedy legends Richard Pryor and Gene Wilder chose *See No Evil, Speak No Evil*—a wild farce about a blind man and a deaf man who become suspects in a murder—for their third joint venture. What is the secret of their chemistry? The two share a look and burst out laughing. "It's exciting. Zesty. Sexy," Wilder chortles. But seriously, folks, "I was anxious to work with Richard again. It was like being away from a party for a long time." Pryor nods assent. "We click somehow. You don't often get that kind of synchronicity."

ILLUSTRATION: CHRIS SCHMIDT

Video Flashes

Eyes in the Sky. Thousands say they have encountered strange visitors from another planet. But those fast enough to have taped or filmed sightings can now share them. The California-based UFO Audio-Video Clearing House collects and catalogs camcorder shots (in VHS and Beta) of "strange aerial objects" from over 900 members. Skeptics and believers can study the sightings for themselves on videotape, since Clearing House director Dave Aaron firmly believes it will be the camcorder "that really shows these objects do fly in the world's skies." For further info, write to the Clearing House at Box 342, Yucaipa, CA 92399-0342.



Blanks for the Memories. Get ready for another world-shaking product from the people who brought us Scotch Tape and Post It Notes: blank-tape videocassettes aimed at working women who like to record soap operas for later viewing. The 3M Company's *All My Soaps* cassettes promise no technical advantages over regular high-grade cassettes, just a pretty pink box to help the soap-laden reels stand out. Look for them at supermarkets only. We kid you not.

Video House Calls. Ten hospitals in and around Washington, D.C., have installed a system that transmits televised images of microscope samples to medical specialists at other facilities. The real-time pictures help the doctors offer immediate diagnoses, without the need to transfer either patients or tissue samples. Corabi International Telemetries in Alexandria, Virginia, developed the system by attaching high-resolution video cameras to motorized microscopes, then sending the images over an optical-fiber phone network. Doctors can further examine the videos with a remote control that can move the microscope around a tissue sample.

William Hurt and Geena Davis in *The Accidental Tourist*

Sic Transit Sony. Workaholics struggling through New York City's Grand Central and World Trade Center commuter terminals can now rent Sony's Video Walkman and a selection of 8mm movies to ease the tedium of the daily grind. Local retailers rent tapes and hardware from Sony, then do the same to commuters by the day, the weekend or the week at rates from $9.95 to $49.95. Dealer libraries consist of 60 titles, including such films as *Coming to America* and *The Accidental Tourist.* If this pilot program clicks, Sony will introduce it in other cities.

—Stan Pinkwas

The film's potentially offensive premise is unusual for a mainstream comedy. How did the stars deal with pressure from groups concerned about patronizing portrayals of the deaf and the blind? Both actors researched their roles extensively: Pryor worked with the Braille Institute in Los Angeles, while Wilder, who co-wrote the screenplay, met with deaf actors, observed many hearing-impaired people and enrolled in lip-reading classes.

"We were aware of what was involved," says Pryor. "I think the film will do a lot to increase awareness of what being handicapped is like. For the first time, Hollywood has made a comedy in which a blind person and a deaf person are the leading characters and are portrayed as strong individuals who grow through their association. That's going to do more than anything we could ever do individually." **—Shari Roman**

Larry Holmes' champion season

Larry Holmes may be a grandfather, but the Easton Assassin is still a man on the move. When the former heavyweight boxing champion isn't working out at a gym, he's cutting real estate deals or working behind the scenes in pro boxing. Now his ring achievements have been memorialized in a historical video called *Champions Forever* (J2).

Lords of the Ring: Former heavyweight champs (left to right) Holmes, Ali, Foreman, Frazier and Norton.

"I watch a lot of boxing videos," says the 40-year-old Holmes. "I watch Jack Johnson, Joe Louis, fighters from those days. But I don't watch fights today because there's a lot of jive, a lot of phoniness. They don't make champions today like they did back then," says the man who reigned in the boxing world from 1978 to 1985. "I think I was the last of the great champions."

The tape on which Holmes shares his feelings about the state of boxing also features Muhammad Ali, Joe Frazier, Ken Norton and George Foreman. "Today's fighters do not dedicate themselves," says Holmes. "They don't go to the woods or train in the mountains like we used to. If Mike Tyson was fighting when we were, you would never have heard of him. He wouldn't have fought guys like Ernie Shavers, who punched too hard for anyone to slug it out with him.

"When I was in high school, I wrestled and played football," recalls Holmes. "I thought I'd go pro and be like O.J. Simpson. I thought I could run for touchdowns like Jim Brown. But by dropping out of school early, my dream kind of slipped away. All I had left was boxing." Ali gave Holmes a break by hiring him as a sparring partner. Ironically, it was Holmes who took away Ali's crown. "He was on the decline and I had worked with him for five years. He wasn't really tough, he was just going through the motions."

—Clifford Meth

Baby It's You Sayles into view

For six years, the video of John Sayles' *Baby It's You* has been held prisoner in a battle over music rights. The 1983 movie, an unvarnished romance between high schoolers (Rosanna Arquette and Vincent Spano) from different walks of life, is set in the late '60s, and a lot of care and money went into fitting the music to the mood. Writer/director Sayles (*Eight Men Out, Matewan*) mingled '50s and '60s sounds to underscore the conflicts the characters faced. He even wrote a couple of lines into the script to reflect the songs.

With four of the 25 songs replaced, the movie is finally ready for video. "Shout," "A Lover's Concerto," "Hazy Shade of Winter" and "At the Zoo" made way for "Surfin' Bird," "Sweet Talkin' Guy," "I Call Your Name" and "Do You Want to Dance."

"Over the years, Paramount said it was interested in putting out the video if they could change the music," Sayles says. "We finally got to the point where they could afford to do it with four songs removed, and I got to pick the replacements. They were all background songs, coming out of jukeboxes and mixed fairly low." Even when making the movie, he says, there were several backup choices for each tune, because "you never know what you're going to run into trying to get music rights."

—Jami Bernard

Wild Things

Think of artist Mary Lucier's *Wilderness* as the ultimate video vacation. Her seven-monitor installation, which has been touring American museums, mixes three synchronized videotapes of wild areas like the Maine coast into a witty, stylized journey across the Northeast. It can currently be seen at Manhattan's Greenberg Wilson Gallery.

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After a somewhat slow start which caused industry pundits to predict the optical disc format's demise, it seems that entertainment buffs have finally caught on to a simple fact: you can't get better audio/video quality from any medium. With digital audio and ultra high resolution pictures, these optical platters — in any size — are unsurpassed.

The laser videodisc is produced in much the same way as the compact disc. First a videotape master is made; a laser writes the information from this master tape onto a glass plate with a photosensitive coating on one side. Next, those areas exposed by the laser beam are developed leaving a pattern of pits on the master disc. A stamper is produced from this master from which the finished discs are replicated. Since the information is stored within the videodisc (not on its surface), dust, fingerprints and the like do not affect it.

Today, you can find thousands of very reasonably priced laser videodisc releases for the taking: some of the very best from IMAGE ENTERTAINMENT. With the latest big name releases, the best in music video and a whole array of software choices, IMAGE ENTERTAINMENT gives the consumer movies with the sharpest, richest visuals available outside of 35mm and 70mm film.

Recently, IMAGE ENTERTAINMENT reached an exclusive licensing and distribution deal with CBS Music Video Enterprises to release Michael Jackson's *Moonwalker* and new titles by Bruce Springsteen, George Michael and other top music stars.

Music lovers take heart. Besides *Moonwalker*, titles include *Terence Trent D'Arby: Introducing the Hardline...Live*, *George Michael: Faith*, *Bruce Springsteen: Video Anthology / 1978-88*, *Viva Santana*, *Ozzy Osbourne: Wicked Videos*, *Europe: The Final Countdown*, *Roger Waters: Radio K.A.O.S.*, *Nelson Mandela 70th Birthday Tribute Concert* and *A Vision Shared: A Tribute to Woody Guthrie and Leadbelly*.

Don't think, though, that laser videodisc fare is limited to music video.

IMAGE ENTERTAINMENT offers the best in laser videodisc releases.

The 3-, 5-, 8-, and 12-inch discs contain everything from blockbusters to cult rock to culture to kidvid.

IMAGE ENTERTAINMENT, for example, recently reached an exclusive agreement with Hanna-Barbera Home Video, and will carry delightful children's cartoons like *The Jetsons Meet The Flintstones*, *Yogi Bear*, and *Scooby Doo*.

The bottom line is this: no matter what your entertainment needs may be, IMAGE ENTERTAINMENT has something to offer.

There is a misconception going around that even though software is proliferating, LD/CD/CDV players are too expensive for the average consumer to consider. Nothing could be further from the truth. Today, you'll find a wide variety of reasonably priced players at retail that not only handle your budget, but that handle CD's and every size of visual discs as well. So, you're really getting two machines for the price of one. The combination LD/CD/CDV player is built on the premise that if you're going for CD audio, why not revamp your video system at the same time? It only makes sense.

The new abundance of software combined with the onslaught of inexpensive machines points to one trend: the laser videodisc will be to the 1990's what the VHS VCR has been to the 1980's.

Laser video aficionados believe that once the average consumer knows of the audio and video superiority of this new technology, they'll be happy to trade in the VCR in favor of a comparably priced combination player.

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LASERDISC — THE NEW WAVE IN HOME ENTERTAINMENT

Music lovers know that when they want to hear the finest audio reproduction, they listen to the brilliance of CD sound. When videophiles and entertainment buffs want to view the cleanest picture, they watch LaserDisc. Now consumers can have the best of both worlds because one machine does it all. New machines, such as the Pioneer CLD-1070, accommodate 12- and eight-inch LaserDiscs, five- and three-inch CDs, CDVs.

Consumers can enjoy digital sound combined with picture quality that is 60 percent sharper than standard videotape output. Special effects, such as slow-motion and freeze-frame, extensive programming and rapid random access of frames and chapters, are just some of the features that attract consumers to the LaserDisc format. LaserDisc provides the versatility, control and quality, previously associated with professional theaters.

Another consumer attraction to LaserDiscs is that the medium is collectable. Optical discs provide the same crystal clear sound and clean picture play-after-play. Because the information on a LaserDisc is read by a beam of laser light, it does not degrade or wear out. In addition, movie aficionados have access to many LaserDisc releases in their original widescreen format often, with never-before-seen footage as well as multiple audio tracks containing historical and film commentary.

LaserDisc also has the support of the major motion picture studios. Pioneer licenses and distributes titles from Warners Bros., Walt Disney and Touchstone Home Video, MGM/UA, Paramount, RCA/Columbia, Pioneer Artists and Nelson Entertainment.

Retailers nationwide offer movies, concert videos, children's entertainment, educational discs, documentaries and more at prices starting from $24.95. Music videos and CDVs start at under $10. Consumers can choose from over 20,000 CD and CDV titles and more than 3,500 LaserDisc releases, with 100 new feature films released on LaserDisc each month.

"...Special effects, such as slow-motion and freeze-frame, extensive programming and rapid random access of frames and chapters, are just some of the high-end features..."

For the 1989 holiday season, Pioneer LDCA will be releasing "Who Framed Roger Rabbit", "Scrooged", "Ghostbusters II" and a remastered, letterbox version of "Lawrence of Arabia". Pioneer Artists will release "The GRP Christmas Collection" featuring jazz artists such as Dave Grusin, Dave Valentin and Lee Ritenour as well as Diva Kiri Takanawa's "A Christmas Concert".

Optical Disc Reference

LDs, otherwise referred to as laser videodiscs, are available in eight- and 12-inch formats. Both sizes come in two varieties, CAV (Constant Angular Velocity) and CLV (Constant Linear Velocity). CAV discs play 30 minutes per side and offer special features such as freeze-frame and slow-motion. While the CLV format does not permit special features, it holds up to 60 minutes of data. New combi players can play all four LD formats.

CDs come in three- and five-inch discs containing digital audio information. They produce distortion-free sound at an extraordinary dynamic range. The five-inch version holds up to 74 minutes of material; the three-inch disc (or CD-single) has a capacity for 20 minutes of music.

CDVs are gold in color, resemble five-inch CDs and have the same storage capacity, however they combine 20 minutes of digital audio with a five minute video clip that can be freeze-framed at its conclusion to accompany the remaining audio portion of the disc.

HOT HOLIDAY HITS

Dangerous Liaisons. Warner. Based on the 18th Century novel about a beautiful woman (Glenn Close) and her ex-lover (John Malkovich) who engage in competitive sexual gamesmanship involving a virtuous married woman played by Michelle Pfeiffer. Highly acclaimed — makes a great present.—**$29.98**

Rain Man. MGM/UA. Dustin Hoffman, in one of his many brilliant performances, plays an autistic man whose brother, Tom Cruise, didn't even know he was alive until after the death of their father. Determined to access their father's estate, the shallow character played by Cruise tries to gain custody of his brother. Critically acclaimed as one of the best films of the season. Rated R, digital Stereo, CX, CC, 3-sided, 1988.—**$29.95**

Coming to America. Paramount. Master comedian Eddie Murphy is a very wealthy African prince who travels to America in search of a wife. Accompanied by his friend (Arsenio Hall), he quickly finds a new job, new friends, new enemies and lots of trouble. A comic masterpiece that will leave you in stitches.—**$24.95**

Tequila Sunrise. Warner. This film deals with the relationship between two high school friends whose lives have taken different paths since graduation. Mel Gibson and Kurt Russel star with Michelle Pfeiffer caught between the two. Rated R, Digital Stereo, CX, CC, 1988.—**$24.98**

DRAMA

The Accused. Jodie Foster plays a hard-working, independent woman who is brutally gang-raped in the back of a neighborhood bar. She and her attorney (Kelly McGillis) prosecute both the attackers and the onlookers in this powerful story that is sure to spark heated ethical debates. Extremely thought-provoking and powerful. Digital Stereo, CX.—**$34.95**

The Accidental Tourist. A romantic comedy-drama about an ambivalent travel writer whose world is turned upside down when his wife leaves him and he meets — believe it or not — an unusual dog trainer. Starring William Hurt, Kathleen Turner and Geena Davis. Digital Stereo, CX, CC, 3-sided.—**$29.98**

The Godfather Part II. Paramount. Often referred to as the best sequel ever made, this is the continuing story of two generations of the Corleone family and their underworld power. Al Pacino and Robert DeNiro offer classic, gripping performances that will leave you stunned. Digital, 4-sided.—**$44.95**

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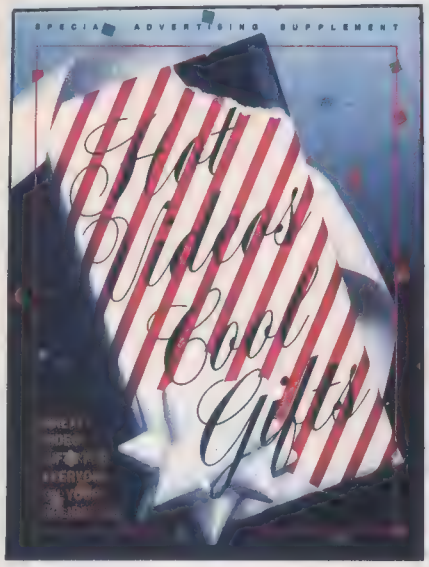

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WORLD WAR II

World War II with Walter Cronkite. Join the front-line news correspondent and narrator, Walter Cronkite, as he covers all the fronts of World War II. From the South Pacific to Europe and North Africa, you'll witness B-17 bombers raiding deep inside Nazi-occupied Europe; U-Boats stalking Allied convoys on the North Atlantic; GI's advancing through mine fields behind Sherman tanks; sailors on the flight deck of a carrier as they close the trap on Japanese carriers; and airborne troops hitting the ground behind enemy lines. Each videocassette volume addresses a different aspect of the war. Volumes include "Air War Over Europe", "The Pacific Campaign", "The Eastern Front", and "The German High Command" which deals with Hitler and his top officers. Walter Cronkite, through CBS News archive footage, describes all the devastation and historical importance of the last "great" war. Each volume is one hour long.—**$29.95** apiece.

WESTERNS

Bonanza: The Collector's Edition. Set in Virginia City, Nevada, Bonanza told the story of the Cartwrights, owners of a nearby 600,000 acre ranch — The Ponderosa. One of the longest running westerns on TV, Bonanza ranked consistently in the top ten rated shows for almost ten years. Lorne Greene starred as Ben Cartwright, a threetime widower; Pernell Roberts as eldest son Adam; Dan Blocker as son Hoss; Michael Landon as youngest son, Little Joe; and Victor Sen Yung as Hop Sing, the cook. This highly independent family seemed to spend less time running the ranch than getting into trouble. Each videocassette contains two original Bonanza episodes filled with the classic escapades of the resourceful Cartwright clan.—**$29.95**

Gunsmoke: The Collector's Edition. Gunsomoke was television's longest running western. It was on the air for an incredible 20 years beginning in 1955. This collector's edition of original, classic Gunsmoke episodes is uncut and unedited. You'll relive the adventures of Matt Dillon (James Arness), Kitty Russell (Amanda Blake), Chester B. Goode (Dennis Weaver) and Doc Adams (Milburn Stone). Gunsmoke became the number one rated show in its third season and remained there for the next four seasons. Over the years, many top stars appeared on the show including Burt Reynolds in a recurring role as blacksmith Quint Asper. Each two-hour volume in the series contains multiple episodes from the original series and includes special favorites like "Matt Gets It", "Kitty's Rebellion" and "The Avengers".—**$29.95**

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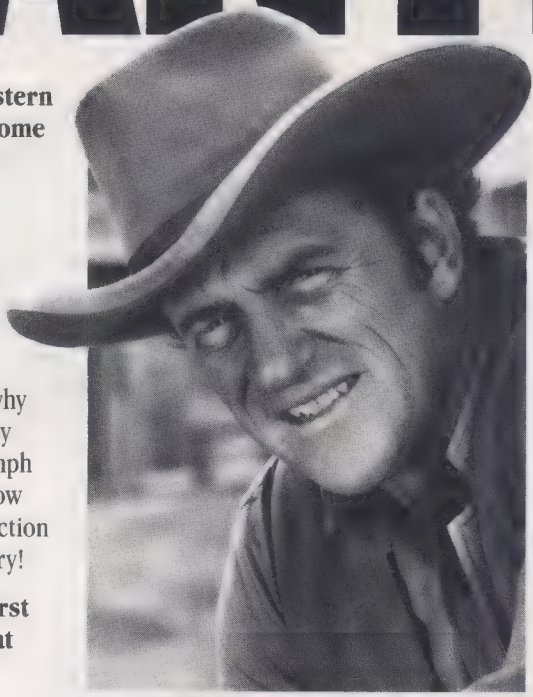
Come home to Dodge City's most beloved citizens: Milburn Stone as Doc Adams, Amanda Blake as Miss Kitty Russell, James Arness as Sheriff Matt Dillon and Dennis Weaver as Deputy Chester Goode.



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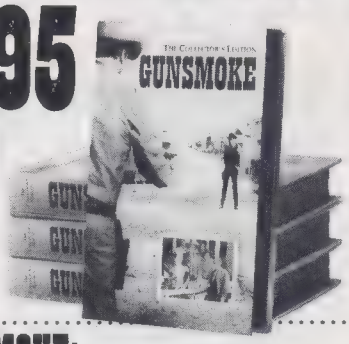

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The African Queen. Humphrey Bogart won the 1951 Academy Award for Best Actor for his remarkable portrayal of a heavy-drinking boat captian on a perilous river voyage during World War I. His companion is the equally memorable Katherin Hepburn in one of her most acclaimed performances. Directed by the legendary John Huston.—**$19.98**

Harry & Tonto. Art Carney won the 1974 Academy Award for Best Actor with this masterful portrayal of an aging widower who flees the city for life on the road accompanied by his faithful cat, Tonto. Directed by Paul Mazursky (*Down and Out in Beverly Hills*), Harry & Tonto is one of Hollywood's most beloved comedies.—**$19.98**

COMEDY

Broadcast News. Can a talented young producer, a handsome anchorman and a dedicated journalist find love and happiness in the high-pressure world of broadcast news? Starring Holly Hunter, William Hurt and Albert Brooks, this hugely successful comedy answers that question in a way as entertaining as it is provocative.—**$19.98**

Big. A 12-year boy wakes up to discover a wish has come true in a "big" way: he's been magically transformed into a 35 year-old man. Stars Tom Hanks, Elizabeth Perkins. This comedy smash-hit is BIG on insight, emotional truths, and most of all, laughs.—**$19.98**

A Fish Called Wanda. John Cleese, Jamie Lee Curtis, Kevin Kline (who won the 1988 Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor for this role) and Michael Palin star in this hilariously original comedy about a gang of social misfits, a jewelry heist and a London barrister who has to choose between respectability and the inimitable Wanda.—**$19.98**

The April Fools. An incredible ensemble cast including Jack Lemmon, Catherine Deneuve, Peter Lawford, Sally Kellerman, Myrna Loy and Charles Boyer puts sparkle and dazzle into this spohisticated romantic comedy about a Wall Street broker who risks everything to have an affair with his boss's wife.—**$19.98**

DRAMA

The Man Who Would Be King. Sean Connery and Michael Caine star in this spectacular adventure classic as two irrepressible soldiers of fortune in 19th Century India whose fondest wishes come true. One of them is made a king! Directed by John Huston.—**$19.98**

Little Big Man. Arthur Penn directed this epoch-making Western about the life of a 121 year-old man who claims to have been everything from a snake oil merchant and professional gunfighter to the only survivor of Custer's Last Stand. Starring Dustin Hoffman and Faye Dunaway, this is one of the most entertaining Western adventures ever.—**$19.98**

Papillion. Henri Carriere's best-selling autobiography explodes onto the screen in this critically acclaimed adventure epic. Steve McQueen stars in the title role as a French convict who plots his escape from the horrors of Devil's Island. Co-starring Dustin Hoffman.—**$19.98**

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The Flying Dutchman. Simon Estes, Matti Salminen, Lisbeth Balshev, Robert Schunk and Anny Schlemm. Bayreuth Festival Orchestra. Director Harry Kupfer's psychologically adventurous Flying Dutchman is now available on CD Video. Phillips Classics.—**$59.95**

La Fille Mal Gardee. Valentina Kozlova, Basel Ballet; cond. John Lanchberry, Vienna Symphony. A spirited performance of an enduring masterpiece abounds with humor, romance, and youthful high spirits. Phillips Classics.—**$34.95**

Puccini: Turandot. Eva Marton, Placido Domingo, Leona Mitchell, Paul Plishka; dir. Zeffirelli; cond. James Levine. Metropolitan Opera Chorus and Orchestra. "Great costumes, a superb cast, enthralling melodies, plus a momentum

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that never waivers and builds to a truly romantic climax." - New York Daily News (1/27/88). Deutsche Grammophon.—**$59.95**

Bizet: Carmen. Agnes Baltsa, Jose Carreras, Leona Mitchell, Samuel Ramey; cond. James Levine. Metropolitan Opera Chorus Orchestra. "James Levine conducted with plenty of panache, while the playing of the orchestra and the singing of the chorus were up to the Met's best current standards." - New York Daily News (2/14/87). Deutsche Grammophon.**$59.95**

Strauss: Ariadne auf Nazos. Jessye Norman, Kathleen Dattle, Tatiana Troyanos, James King, cond. James Levine. Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. "Quite literally dominating the opera is Jessye Norman as Ariadne, rising from her melancholy swoons to deliver an extraordinary rich, ravishing demonstration of the art of dramatic soprano." New York Times (4/7/88). Deutsche Grammophon.—**$59.95**

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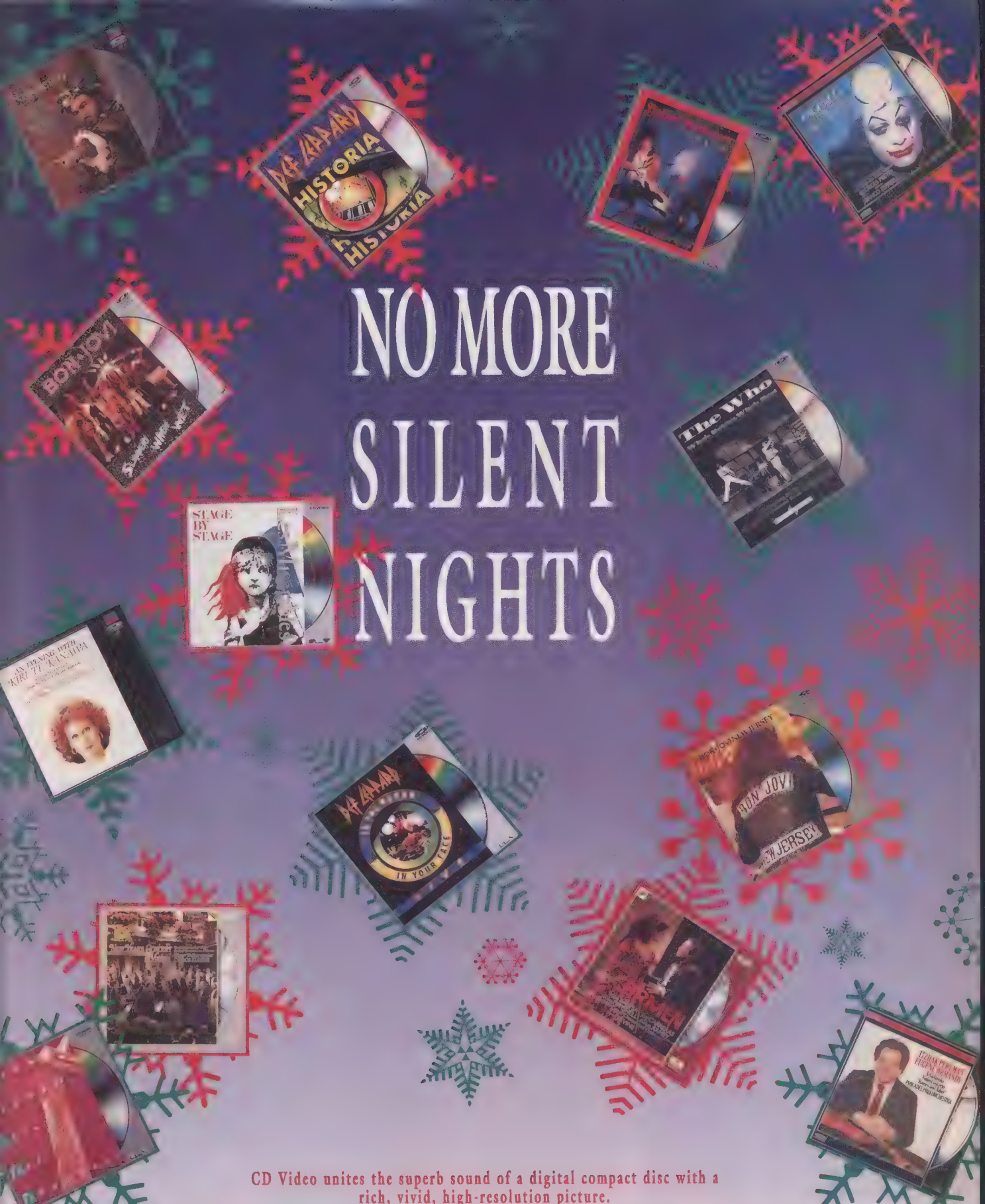

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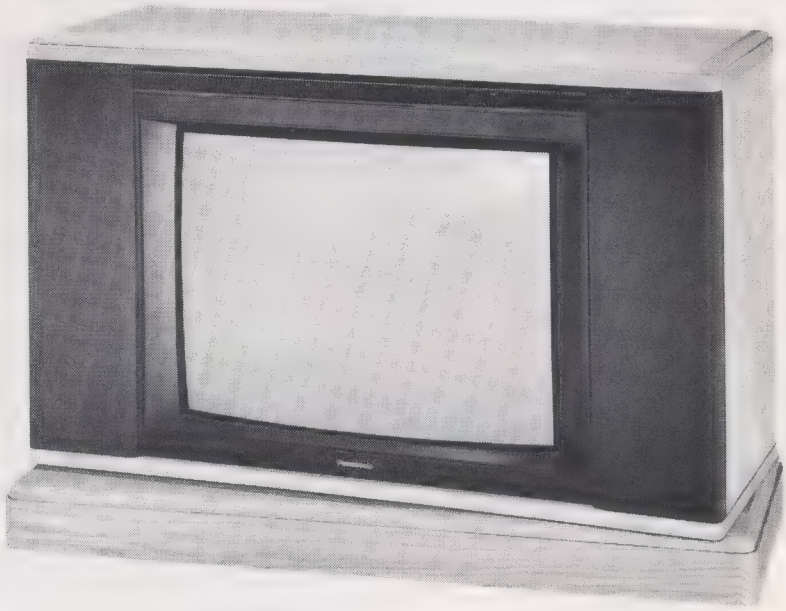
EDITED BY KENNETH KORMAN

NEW PRODUCTS



Panasonic TV features audio system

Panasonic's 31-inch color CTL-3181S television features a built-in stereo sound system. Four speakers are housed in its extra-wide cabinet. A parental guidance control blocks specific channels for 12, 24 or 48 hours at a time. A programmable on/off timer can help ward off burglers by giving the appearance that viewers are home. Also included are an MTS decoder, S-video inputs, external speaker terminals, a swivel base and an infrared remote control for access to a wide variety of audio and video adjustments.

Price: $1,899.

For additional information, circle No. 134 on Reader Service Card.

Samsung introduces first camcorder

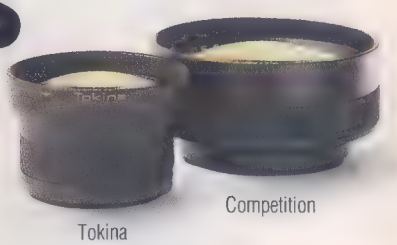
The full-size VHS SC-F500 is Samsung's first camcorder. It features an f/1.4 6x power zoom lens with macro and a half-inch CCD image sensor with 7 lux low-light sensitivity. A high-speed shutter runs at 1/1000 of a second. Other highlights include infrared autofocus, auto iris, quick review, a three-way power supply and an onscreen counter/calendar. The camcorder weighs 4.6 pounds.

Price: $1,199.

For additional information, circle No. 135 on Reader Service Card.

TOKINA

Lightens



1.8x teleconverter is only 1.5″ long and weighs just 3.4 oz. Half the width and half the weight of the competition. In addition to ease-of-handling, compact size means less weight and strain on the camcorder focusing mechanism.

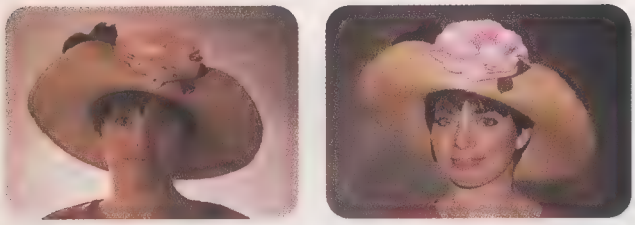
Doubles

The fleeting look on a child's face becomes twice as much fun, and all images become much more enjoyable when Tokina doubles the magnification of the camcorder lens. The Tokina VC-20, 2.0x telephoto lens is just 1.7″ long and weighs only 5.3 oz.

Widens

The whole team gets into the act when the Tokina wide-angle converter makes the image twice as wide. Outdoor shots get wider. Indoors, even a family room has a wide angle view. The Tokina VC-05, 0.5x wide angle conversion lens is only 2″ long and weighs just 5.1 oz.

Enlightens



The Tokina 3-intensity light provides illumination which is soft and wide, as opposed to the narrow and hard look of many camcorder lights. Tokina's ability to provide a more attractive, more natural look can be seen particularly in the details around the face and eyes.

Tokina lights can be adapted to run off of most camcorder batteries.

Sharpens

Tokina is world leader in optical innovation for SLR cameras. Now, for video, Tokina presents a line of conversion lenses from wide-angle to telephoto to zoom for amateurs and professionals.

Also, image-wise video lights.

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For additional information, circle No. 12 on Reader Service Card.

No charge for 5 year lens and 1 year light warranty. For nearest Tokina dealer (800) 421-1141 or (213) 537-9380 in California. Tokina Optical Corporation, 1512 Kona Drive, Compton, CA 90220.

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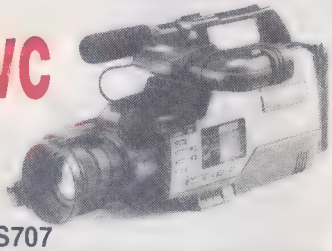
JVC



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Zenith camcorder boasts animation mode

Zenith's VM7150 VHS camcorder includes an animation mode that records in quarter-, half- and one-second bursts. High-speed shutter settings include 1/250, 1/500 and 1/1000 of a second. Other features are an 8x power zoom lens, a flying erase head, a superimposer, a self-timer, audio/video fade; automatic focus, iris and white balance; and a background music input for portable stereos.

Price: $1,499.

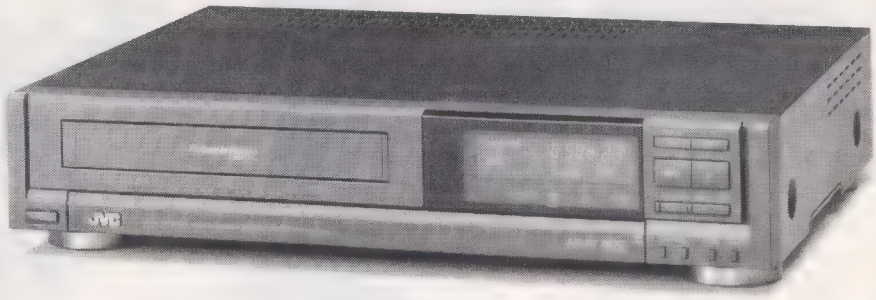
For additional information, circle No. 136 on Reader Service Card.

Philips remote runs three components

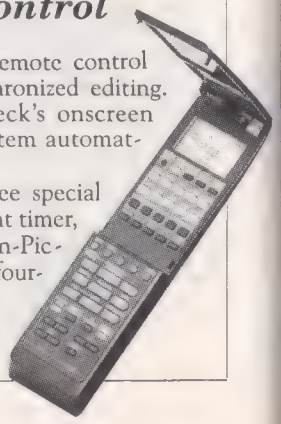
Philips' Smart One universal remote control is programmed to run most TV sets, VCRs and cable boxes. It can also learn an unlimited number of commands for operating up to three components at a time. A back-up power source preserves the commands when the batteries expire.

Price: $79.95.

For additional information, circle No. 137 on Reader Service Card.



JVC VCR offers two-deck remote control



JVC's HR-D850U VHS hi-fi VCR comes with an infrared remote control that allows one-touch operation of two JVC VCRs for synchronized editing. Timer programming can be performed using either the deck's onscreen graphics or the remote's LCD display. Its digital tracking system automatically and continuously adjusts for optimum playback.

Other features include a DA-4 head system for noise-free special effects, a 181-channel tuner with MTS decoder, a 24-hour instant timer, time, index and intro search functions and a Quad-Picture-in-Picture feature for continuous four-window channel scan and four-window strobing of taped material.

Price: $899.

For additional information, circle No. 138 on Reader Service Card.

For additional information, circle No. 13 on Reader Service Card.

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You can also connect up to four VCRs at a time for multiple copying. There's no perceptible distortion or crosstalk. And, if you're looking for ways to improve the next generation on simulcasts, the Pro Switcher lets you take the stereo signal from your FM tuner and the video signal from your TV and make a true stereo recording on your VCR.

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Open Your Own Sound Studio With SoundsRight™

Give your videos a real soundtrack. With SoundsRight, you can easily add narration or background music to your videos from up to three sources–stereo or mono.

SoundsRight also includes an Auto Fade feature that automatically fades picture and sound. It makes producing better-looking and better-sounding videos easy. And it can also be used for your audio tapes.

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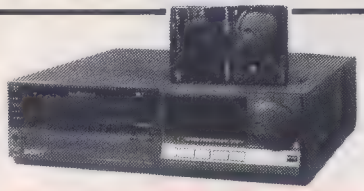

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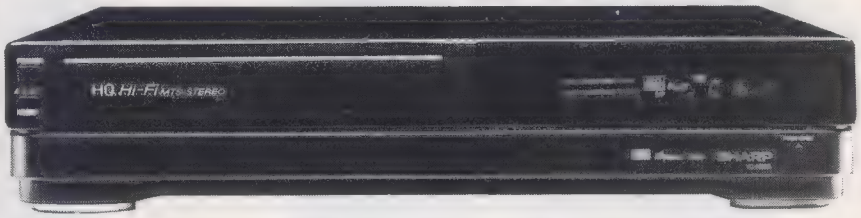


Sharp VCR has full-load system

Sharp's VC-H860U VHS hi-fi VCR incorporates a full-load tape transport for quick response to basic transport commands. A favorite channel feature memorizes four channels for easy access. Other highlights include onscreen programming, an MTS/SAP decoder, a real time counter and auto zero back.

Price: $699.95.

For additional information, circle No. 139 on Reader Service Card.

Camcorder records in 1 lux light

Sylvania's VKC242 VHS camcorder has a gain-up switch that allows recording in light as low as 1 lux. Digital special effects include picture wipe, strobe and six types of image mix. A 10-watt DC video light is included.

Other highlights are an f/1.2 8x zoom lens with macro, a built-in speaker with a volume control, a high-speed shutter, a time lapse/self-timer function, a flying erase head, audio and video dub, index search, wind noise defeat, auto date and review/edit search.

Price: $1,849.

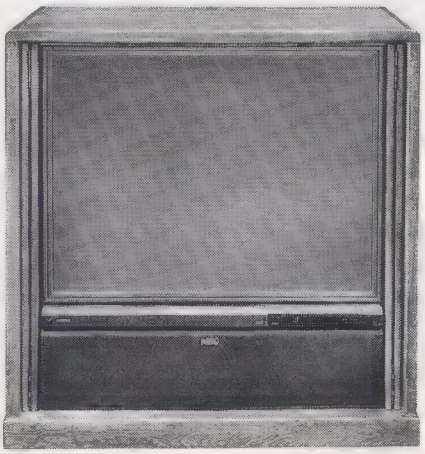
For additional information, circle No. 140 on Reader Service Card.

Carrying case holds Game Boy

Nuby Manufacturing's plastic Carry Case for the Nintendo Game Boy portable game system holds the Game Boy unit, video link cable, headphones and six Game Paks. A durable snaplock cover keeps each component safe and organized.

Price: $10.

For additional information, circle No. 141 on Reader Service Card.



NEC DT5271S

NEC rear-projection TVs feature PIP

NEC's DT5260S and DT5271S 52-inch rear-projection televisions deliver picture-in-picture effects. Video noise reduction, MTS/SAP decoders and 14-inch secondary screens are also included. In addition, the 5271 offers Dolby, hall and Matrix surround sound modes. Its built-in doors can be closed to help the set blend in with a room's decor or hidden inside the cabinet for viewing.

Prices: DT5260S, $3,900; DT5271S, $4,400.

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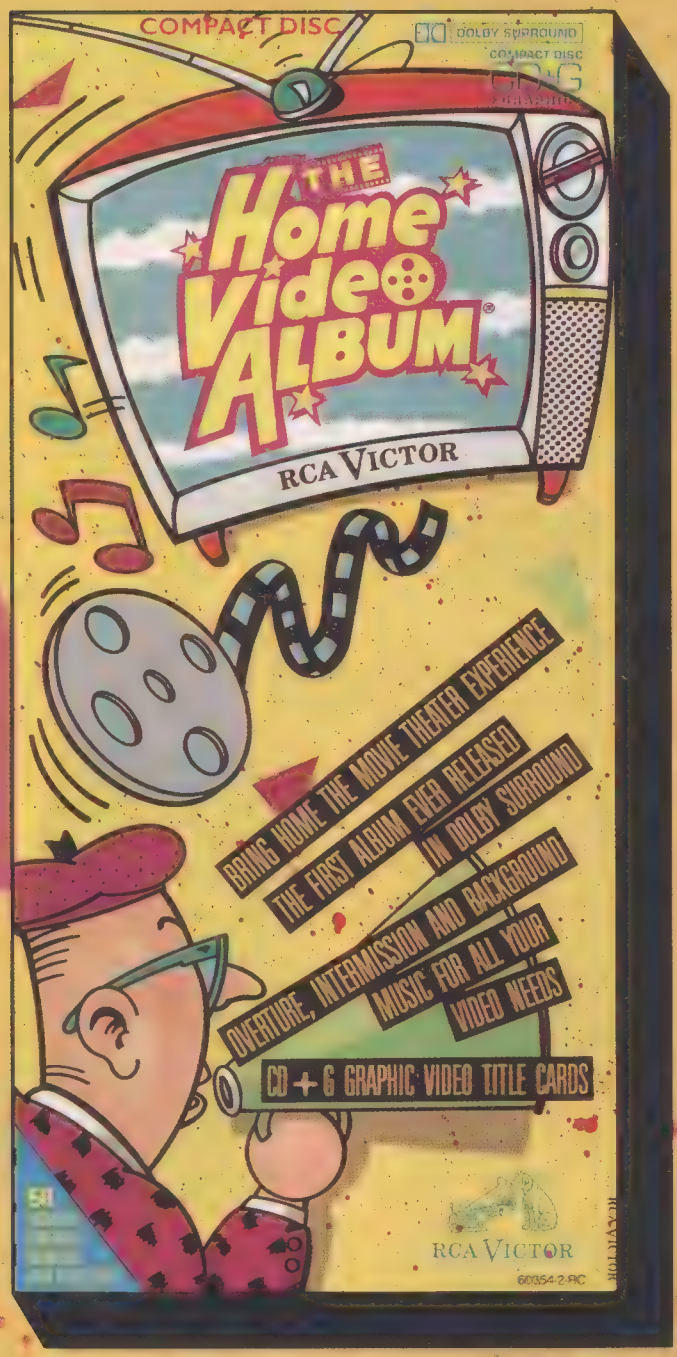

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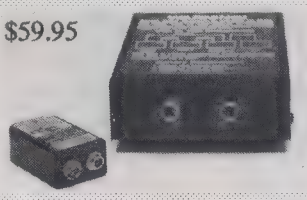

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NEW PRODUCTS

Sanyo AVM250

Sanyo televisions have quartz tuners

Sanyo's AVM200 20-inch and AVM250 25-inch televisions feature 119-channel quartz tuners. Built-in timers automatically turn off the sets at predetermined times. The AVM200 has a 24-button infrared remote, while the AVM250 has an 18-button remote.

Prices: AVM200, $329; AVM250, $399.

For additional information, circle no. 143 on Reader Service Card.

Citizen TV features tiny color LCD

Citizen's CBM P422 2.2-inch LCD TV has an auto tuning feature with bar indicator and four terminal jacks: DC input, A/V input, antenna extension and earphone. It runs on four AA batteries or an AC adapter. A car battery adapter is optional.

Price: $129.99.

For additional information, circle no. 144 on Reader Service Card.

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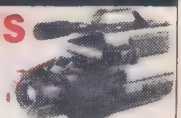

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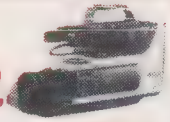

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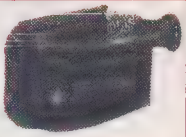

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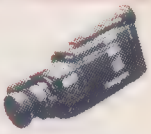
SONY



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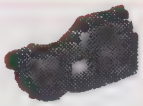

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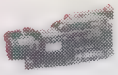

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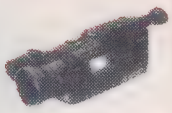

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CAMCORNER

A few new angles on home videomaking

BY ELINOR STECKER

The speaker was short and unimposing—but a leader in his field. And there I was, camcorder in hand, wondering how I could make him come across with the prestige his accomplishments demanded. I knelt on the floor so I could point my camera up at the speaker. A shot from a *low angle* has a psychological effect that gives an audience a feeling of awe about a subject. In life, we say we "look up to" an important person. It works the same way in movies.

Camera angles are some of the simplest and most useful tools a photographer has to work with. They give you the power to guide an audience's emotions and influence the way viewers perceive distance, size and speed.

The most basic camera angle is the *level angle,* which is really not much of an angle at all: simply hold the camcorder so it's fairly horizontal. You'll probably use this position 90 percent of the time. It's also often called an *eye-level* shot. But whose eye level? If you're of average height and you're shooting an average-height subject, raising the camcorder to your eye gives you an eye-level shot—as long as you and the subject are both standing. But if your friend plops down on a sofa, or if you're extra tall, you'll have to tilt your camcorder downward.

Eye level, then, is the level of your subject's eyes. When the subject is seated, sit, squat or put your camcorder on a tripod and adjust it so the lens is level with his or her eyes. Use the same procedure when taping children or pets. If your subject doesn't have eyes, hold the camcorder parallel to the floor.

Let's go back to our low-angle shot and tilt the camcorder more forcefully. The more extreme the camcorder's angle, the more powerful or threatening your subject is likely to appear. (Imagine the effect of shooting from a really low angle to add menace when a character enters a room.) If you shoot from a low angle when the subject is standing in front of a crowd of people, he or she will dominate the scene, appearing to tower over everyone else.

If you want the action to accelerate, crouch as you shoot, and runners, skaters or racing horses will appear to add several miles per hour to their times. Set your lens at the shortest focal length to intensify the effect more. Shooting with a lowered camcorder is also an easy way to straighten up a busy background or a messy foreground. The sky or a handsome ceiling can replace clutter as the backdrop for a scene and eliminate everything in front. Such an angle can make a landscape more interesting because it lowers the horizon and exaggerates the converging lines of perspective. Everything we have said about a low-angle shot applies in reverse when talking about a *high-angle* shot. Climb up on a chair or a staircase: from up high, a subject appears shorter and less significant. Speeding trains seem slower and a runner looks less likely to win a race, especially when the action moves toward or away from the camcorder.

PETER FASOLINO

When you're establishing location at the opening of a video, you'll want to orient your audience. A high-angle shot is one of the best ways to do it. Think of all the times you've seen movies start with a flight over a city or a panorama shot from a high vantage point. You don't have to rent a helicopter, but you probably can find a ladder, a window, or even a table to give you a fresh point from which to shoot. In an eye-level view, foreground objects are apt to block objects behind them. But in a high-angle shot, you can let your audience see everything. Relationships between objects become clear, and patterns—such as the flowers in a formal garden or geometric patches of farmland—reveal themselves. Foreground and background objects will appear to be about the same distance from the lens, so they'll all be in focus.

The video picture is a flat, two-dimensional image—dull, uninteresting. It's up to you to give it depth. Suppose you want to videotape your house. If you stand so the camcorder sees only the front of the building, you'll lose all sense of its dimension. The house might as well be a cardboard cutout because you're shooting with a flat angle. Now move to take in the front and one side. An *oblique* or *three-quarter angle* conveys a feeling of solidity.

To create a three-dimensional effect, use a three-quarter viewpoint and shoot from a lower or higher position. This *double angling* shows the top or the bottom of your subject in addition to the two sides, and just a slight amount of it can add that feeling of depth. You can use double angling to intensify other

A BIG-SCREEN TELEVISION THAT OVERWHELMS YOUR SENSES. NOT YOUR LIVING ROOM.

PICTURE-IN-PICTURE

SWAP

FREEZE

ZOOM

CHANNEL GUIDE

SURROUND SOUND STEREO

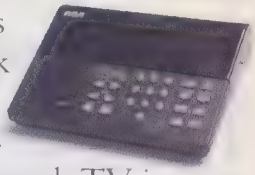
CHANNEL CAPTIONING

THE RCA 31″ COLORTRAK 2000™

While many large-screen televisions are imposing to look at, all too often their size makes them impossible to live with.

The new RCA 31″ ColorTrak 2000™ television, you will be happy to learn, is an exception. With a cabinet depth of only 20.5 inches.

A fact you may find remarkable, considering that into its streamlined dimensions the 31″ ColorTrak 2000 packs electronics so advanced, you can watch TV in ways you never before thought possible.



Witness the eye-catching displays before you. Including picture-in-picture viewing,* freeze, zoom, and an ingenious multi-channel guide.

Naturally, our new television doesn't limit its appeal solely to the visual sense. It also comes with Surround Sound stereo to envelop you in audio of movie-theater vividness.**

And, for ease of operation, it's equipped with one of the most comprehensive remotes in the industry. Capable of controlling not only each function of your television set, but key functions of all major brands of VCR and cable converter, as well.

If you'd like your senses overwhelmed by the new 31″ ColorTrak 2000, it can be arranged with the minimum of inconvenience at your nearest RCA dealer.

And, from then on, with even less inconvenience in your living room.

RCA

NUMBER ONE WITH THE TOUGHEST CRITICS IN THE WORLD.™

*VCR required for picture-in-picture function. Pictures simulated. **Additional set of speakers required for Surround Sound stereo. © 1989 Thomson Consumer Electronics, Inc.

effects. Combine a three-quarter angle with a low angle to improve the separation between a subject and its background or to add to the illusion of speed and power.

Another angle to place in your repertoire is called a *dutch angle* or *dutch tilt*. Most of us have taken some shots in which the horizon line is not quite straight and the buildings slant a bit. A dutch angle is like this only more so. This type of shot doesn't look like a mistake because it isn't. It's a deliberate effort to throw an image off balance but not so sharply as to make a scene appear to be lying on its side. If you want to suggest that your star is drunk, delerious or highly emotional, this is the way to go. It's doubly so if you combine it with a low-angle shot. You can also use the dutch tilt to suggest an earthquake, a car crash and other catastrophes.

Images that slant from left to right are forceful. Those that go in the other direction are not. But it's sometimes effective to use pairs of tilts in opposite directions. Just make sure the angles of the tilts are equal. Adventurous camera angles can add variety and impact to your videotapes. Getting away from the usual flat, level camera angles can let you control how you want an audience to feel about what's on the screen. But be judicious about using the more extreme angles. As with any movie technique, the technique should not call attention to itself. After all, its true purpose is to propel the action and tell a story audiences will want to watch and keep watching. ■

Arkon Camcharger Recharges Camcorder Batteries on the Road

Recharges Safely from Lighter Socket.

Model MP100 CAMCHARGER plugs into the lighter socket to recharge Sony-type (6V); Olympus/Chinon-type (7.2V) and JVC-type (9.6V) camcorder batteries quickly, with or without the engine running. Features built-in short circuit and overload protection.

Model MP110 CAMCHARGER II recharges 12V VHS camcorder batteries, including those used for Panasonic, Hitachi, and RCA camcorders. Special "quick charge" mode restores battery power even faster.

Both CAMCHARGER models will also supply regulated voltage directly from the lighter socket to power most camcorders and other portable equipment.

Optional UL listed AC Power Supply (model CL514) is available if you want your CAMCHARGER to function as a regular AC sourced battery charger.

With a CAMCHARGER Mobile Camcorder Battery Charger there is no more "down time" looking for an AC outlet. Buy a CAMCHARGER today and set your camcorder free.

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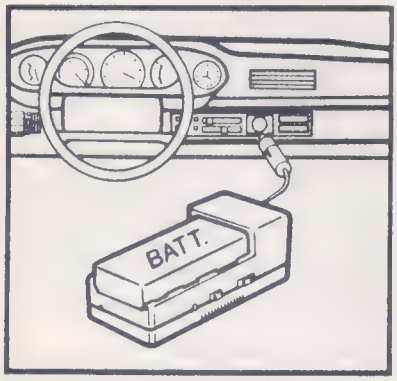
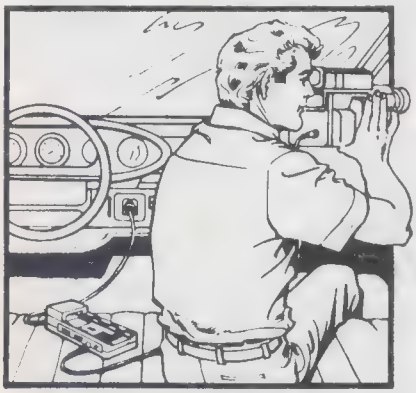


As a mobile battery charger.



As a mobile power supply.

For additional information, circle No. 20 on Reader Service Card.

TECH TIPS

Wiring guide

When rewiring a VCR for temporary use, like dubbing from one machine to another, you can ease the strain of remembering which cable goes where by labelling the top rear edge of the VCR with white tape to indicate the usual position of each jack. You'll still need a mirror and flashlight, but you'll save time and limit frustration.

TV in the round

You can add versatility to a small bedroom or den TV set by propping it on an improvised turntable that swivels to accommodate different seating positions. Rubber maid makes a kitchen turntable suitable for most screens up to nine inches in size, while many housewares stores carry sturdier Lazy Susans. You can make your own by sandwiching a ball-bearing swivel mount (about $5 at hardware stores) between two pieces of flat wood.

Calling all tipsters

Do you know something we don't about VCRs, TVs, camcorders and other home video equipment? We'll share it with our readers if you share it with us as a "Tech Tip." We'll also give you credit and a $25 bounty for each tip we publish. Tips should be informative and to the point. Please include your name, address and phone number—and a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you wish your submission returned. Send submissions to Tech Tips, *Video Magazine*, 460 West 34 St., New York, NY 10001.

All-in-one multi-function AV editor with fades, wipes and audio mixing

Compatible with Super VHS

Add the effects the professionals use to your home video productions! With a variety of wipe patterns and background colors, plus independent fading of picture and sound, transitions from one scene to the next can be made more attractive. The JX-SV55's audio mixing circuit lets you add sophisticated sound effects, to enhance your video productions.

The JX-SV55 from JVC is a versatile unit that gives the home videophile everything he or she needs to enhance video productions, a post-production tool that adds a new dimension of creativity.

VIDEO EDITING PROCESSOR
JX-SV55

- **16 Wipes by combining 5 basic patterns**
- **8 Background colors, plus color-bar chart**
- **Color balancing with joystick controller**
- **Video enhancer**
- **Independent audio/video faders**
- **Audio mixing with 2 AUX inputs, mic input, and level meter**
- **Adjustable color intensity**
- **2 AV inputs, 1 AV output plus monitor, compatible with Super VHS VCRs**
- **Video processor loop**
- **Headphone monitor**
- **Edit Control function for synchronous start/pause of specified JVC VCRs**

JX-S100 **AV Selector**

- **4 inputs, 2 outputs plus monitor, with S-VIDEO terminals**
- **Composite and S-VIDEO monitor outputs with stereo audio**
- **Dubbing and editing possible between two VCRs**
- **Front panel jacks for temporary connection**
- **Easy-to-handle "passive design"**

S-Video Connection Cables for Super VHS

VC-S105HG (0.5 m/1.6 ft)
VC-S110HG (1 m/3.3 ft)
VC-S120HG (2 m/6.5 ft)
VC-S130HG (3 m/9.8 ft)
VC-S150HG (5 m/16 ft)

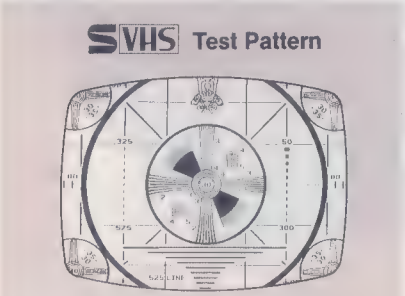
JVC

Innovations in VCR Technology

Mitsubishi, one of the world's leading manufacturers of video-cassette recorders, has applied extensive research and development toward an ongoing quest for VCR perfection. The new Mitsubishi lineup represents a quantum leap toward that objective. Each model embodies peak video performance, astounding sonic quality, faster access time, and simpler operation.

S-VHS Delivers Greater Performance

S-VHS comprises several distinctive design improvements fostered by Mitsubishi and a handful of other leading manufacturers. Dramatic performance enhancements have boosted horizontal resolution to over 400 lines from the 240 lines of conventional VHS. This new higher standard results in sharper detail, finer visual tonality, and a richer viewing experience.



400+ lines

The superb picture quality is due to four technological advances in VCR design: a broader luminance range; cleaner separation of the luminance and chrominance signals; use of finer magnetic oxides on the recording tape; and a narrower video head gap.

The first improvement is the most dramatic. The white peak carrier for the luminance signal has been increased from 4.8MHz to 7MHz. This greatly increases the amount of room available for recording visual detail on the tape, and is the primary contributor toward the 400+ lines of horizontal resolution.

A video picture is composed of both a brightness, or "Y" signal (which is primarily black and white), and a color or "C" component. By NTSC definition, the luminance and color counterparts are combined in a single composite video signal. However, they must be separate entities before the CRT of a video monitor can utilize them to display the picture.

By totally separating them, potential interferences inherent in the composite NTSC signal can be avoided. S-VHS isolates the two and eliminates color/detail interference artifacts like cross color and dot crawl in the process. Once separated, the two signals can be sent independently to a compatible video monitor via separate S terminal.

Higher density tape oxides enable more signal to be recorded to tape. This leads to significantly reduced noise over the entire frequency range and an additional boost in the higher ranges.

The narrow gap of the precision-engineered tape head exhibits greater record/playback sensitivity. The fullest range of signals can be successfully captured to and recalled from the tape.

Improved S-VHS Performance with a Dynamic Comb Filter

The Dynamic Comb Filter of the Mitsubishi HS-U71 greatly improves color performance over conventional S-VHS filtering techniques. It separates the combined luminance and chrominance signals more effectively. When transmitted together as a composite video signal, the picture is prone to crosstalk interference between the detail and color. This interference appears as color "flicker" (color patterns in fine details), dot crawl (running noise along edges), moiré patterns and general color blurring.

Conventional

DCF

Conventional linear filtering simply isolates the components by frequency. Mitsubishi's Dynamic Comb Filter is a *non*-linear filter that dynamically separates the Y and C components of the signal according to signal content as they are recorded. Images are much cleaner and sharper with brighter and more vivid colors.

Unique Circuitry

Special circuitry included on select Mitsubishi VCRs work in concert to improve overall picture performance.

EP Noise Reduction of the HS-U71 removes residual noise from the leading edge of the signal wave form, eliminating edge noise in EP recordings. Mitsubishi's unique Vertical Image Delineation (VID) circuit boosts contrast at image edges as the lines scan horizontally across the picture.

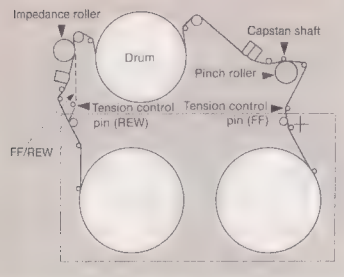
An S-Detail switch enables the comb filter to be switched off during dubbing of S-VHS sources. This eliminates unnecessary Y/C filtering of the already-separated signal and improves overall reproducibility with a minimum of interference.

Improved Tape-Handling

In addition to picture quality advances, Mitsubishi has made significant improvements in how the tape is controlled. Twin Digital Auto Tracking, found on all models, continuously monitors tape/head synchronization and automatically adjusts it for optimum playback. Manual tracking controls are totally eliminated.

Mitsubishi's Swift Servo System tape transport handles tape-control duties with extremely quick response time (a rapid 0.7 seconds from stop to play). Winding speeds are startlingly fast. The HS-U51 and HS-U31 shuttle at a speedy 110 times normal playback speed. The HS-U71 and HS-U61 are the first VCRs in the world to reach a stunning 200 times normal speed in rewind and fast-forward modes.

Swift Servo Deck



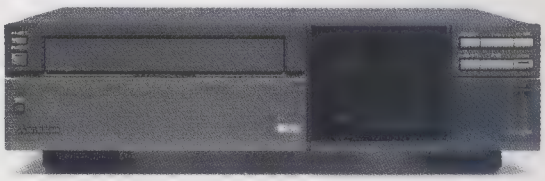
The Payoff is on the Screen

The goal of all this research and development is simply to provide the best possible picture quality at home. That's the only place it counts. Like all Mitsubishi video products, our VCRs are designed from your side of the screen.

To check out the current Mitsubishi lineup, see your authorized dealer. For the location of an authorized Mitsubishi dealer near you, just call 1 (800) 527-8888, extension 245.

U71

- *S-VHS recording and playback capabilities*
- *Hi-Fi stereo sound*
- *Dynamic Comb Filter*
- *Swift Servo System*
- *Twin Digital Auto Tracking*
- *Step-by-step menu programming system*
- *FX4 video heads*
- *Spot Check, Index, Time Search × 200*
- *Programmable/196-function remote control*



HS-U71

U61

- *S-VHS recording and playback capabilities*
- *Hi-Fi stereo sound*
- *Swift Servo System*
- *Step-by-step menu programming system*
- *Twin Digital Auto Tracking*
- *FX4 video heads*
- *Spot Check, Index, Time Search × 200*
- *Unified remote control*

HS-U61

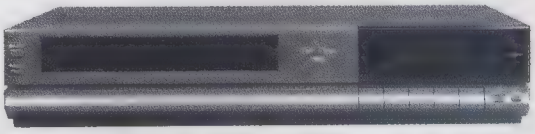
U51

- *Hi-Fi stereo sound*
- *Swift Servo System*
- *Twin Digital Auto Tracking*
- *Step-by-step menu programming system*
- *FX4 video heads*
- *Spot Check, Index, Time Search × 110*
- *Unified remote control*

HS-U51

U31

- *Swift Servo System*
- *Twin Digital Auto Tracking*
- *FX4 video heads*
- *Step-by-step menu programming system*
- *Spot Check, Index, Time Search × 110*
- *Unified remote control*



HS-U31

For additional information, circle No. 21 on Reader Service Card.

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TECHNICALLY, ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE™

Panasonic Puts SVHS Editing On The Table.

Make your next video soar to even greater heights. With the Panasonic® AG-1960 SVHS Editing VCR. By bringing the exceptional resolution of SVHS and a host of professional editing capabilities to your table.

For starters, the AG-1960 SVHS Editing VCR delivers over 400 lines of resolution. And it's upwardly compatible with VHS. But that's not all that makes it so special. Because the AG-1960 lets you arrange videos into any sequence you desire. With professional editing capabilities like insert and assembly editing, and audio dubbing when coupled with a Panasonic AG-A95 Editing Controller.

To speed up the editing process, the AG-1960 incorporates a jog/shuttle dial, auto digital tracking and an innovative High Response Mechanism. Which dramatically reduces its fast forward and rewind times. And brings up images from "stop" in less than three seconds.

So if you're ready to do more than just play and record, put a Panasonic AG-1960 SVHS Editing VCR on your table.

For more information, see your Panasonic Professional/Industrial Video Dealer, or call:
Eastern Zone: (201) 348-7620
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Atlanta Region: (404) 925-6837
Western Zone:
Seattle Region: (206) 285-8883
Los Angeles Region: (714) 373-7275

Panasonic
Professional/Industrial Video

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SPECIAL VACATION CONTEST

WIN A TRIP TO EUROPE!

Enter your top tape in the Video/Scotch Vacation Contest.

Send us your vacation videotape and win a trip to Europe.

The Grand Prize in our New Video Magazine/Scotch Videocassette Vacation Contest is an all-expenses-paid trip for one to Cologne, West Germany, and to the exciting Photokina show. The biennial Photokina is the world's largest showcase of new video and photgraphic equipment.

This is a golden opportunity to see how your creative directorial talents and camera techniques stack up against other Video Magazine readers—and to win a European trip in the bargain. Our rules are simple: Entries must be on videotape (no film). They may be any length but should not exceed 30 minutes. Any half-inch or 8mm format is acceptable.

Videotapes of any and all vacations are eligible, whether they be lazy lie-on-the-beach affairs or active mountain-climbing epics. No restrictions are placed on methods used in producing vacation videotapes, but entrants are encouraged to make them as professional as possible through use of voice-over narration, graphics and other production and editing techniques. Judging will be done by the editorial staff of Video Magazine.

GRAND PRIZE: EUROPEAN TRIP

The Grand Prize winner will spend a week in West Germany. First stop, Cologne, at the beginning of October 1990, where he or she will be joined by representatives of 3M, maker of Scotch-brand videocassettes, and Video Magazine, for a tour of Photokina. The huge Photokina—World's Fair of Imaging Systems, open to both trade visitors and to the public—drew 153,000 visitors from 123 countries in 1988. After the fair, it's off on a sightseeing tour of Cologne and other areas of West Germany.

SECOND PRIZE

Up to $1,000 toward the purchase of a camcorder, plus a Video Magazine Jogging Suit, Sweatshirt and Tote Bag.

THIRD PRIZE

Up to $400 toward the purchase of a VCR, plus a Video Magazine Sweatshirt and Tote Bag.

FOURTH PRIZE

Ten Scotch Pro-Cam Videocassettes, plus a Video Magazine Tote Bag.

All entries must be postmarked no later than April 2, 1990, and cannot be returned. Send them to:

Video Magazine/Scotch Videocassette
Vacation Contest
Video Magazine
460 West 34 Street
New York, NY 10001

For full contest information, see page 140.

VIDEOTESTS

VIDEOTEST NUMBER 516

Toshiba Super VHS hi-fi editing VCR

Toshiba's latest top-of-the-line VCR, the SV-R990, is a top-notch editing deck with a dazzling array of features. Most unusual is a scanner that lets you transfer graphics directly from paper to videotape. The scanned pictures may be combined with additional graphics in the deck's memory and with titles from a built-in character generator that can help you polish openings and scene transitions.

Like several competitors, the SV-R990 automatically assemble edits sequences of up to eight scenes, as long as the scenes are separated by no more than an hour on the master tape. It can place these scenes within six frames of the desired point. The internal counters used to achieve this will also help you insert scenes onto previously recorded material. The remote's jog/shuttle dial must be used to accurately select edit points. Because the deck has a synchro edit terminal, it can be used either as the master (player) or the slave (recorder) in an editing system.

The SV-R990 also boasts a variety of digital special effects. Included are memory, paint art, strobe, fades, wipes to or from a specific color or to a stored negative or positive still image, color fades, color correction, TV/still and superimpose with reversible wipe and memory.

Despite this array of features, we have a few reservations about the deck. For example, we would have included a jog/shuttle dial on the front panel as well as on the remote, or at least a means of hardwiring the remote to the VCR. We also wish the assemble edit function worked more precisely. The door over the cassette hatch is a pain in the neck and at cross purposes with some operational modes. Finally, the owner's manual leaves a lot to be desired. It appears to have been poorly translated from Japa-

Toshiba SV-R990 Super VHS VCR

DATA

Suggested Price: $2,199.95

Weight: 25.6 pounds

Dimensions: 4-5/8 x 18-3/8 x 16-3/8 inches (h/w/d)

Power Requirements: 120 VAC, 60 Hz

Power Consumption: 58 W

Tape Format: S-VHS/VHS

Tape Speeds: record—SP, EP; playback—SP, LP, EP

Video Heads: 4

Play Speed Select: auto

Speed Play: 2x

Variable Speed: bidirectional—1/10x, 1/4x, 1x, 5x, 7x (21x, EP)

Cue & Review (Search): SP—5x; EP—15x

Fast Forward/ Rewind Time: 4-3/4 min. for T-120

Remote: IR wireless with VCR 1/2 switch, jog/shuttle dial and exposed buttons for power, jog/shuttle, 1/10 slow, 1/4 slow, slow tracking up and down, rewind (search), play, fast forward (search), stop, still/pause, 2x, record, channel up and down, 10-digit keypad, 100, TV/CATV, input select, audio select, TV/VCR, auto channel memory, add and erase plus indicators for jog/shuttle, digital effect/title and remote signal transmitted. Under a flap are buttons for title—create, title scanner on/off, letter, position, size, color, clear, character and background; digital effects—TV still, pix retention, DNR, memory recall, paint art, strobe, negative/positive, wipe, fade, color fade, color corrector, select up and down, and digital clear; digital superimpose—memory, on/off, wipe and reverse; edit—audio insert, video insert, assemble, mark, start and edit confirm; locators—zero return, remaining, reset, time search, index, address, mark and erase; and service—SP/EP, EE (input preview), display, menu and confirm

Counter Digits: 5—hrs:mins:secs

Counter Memory: zero return

Linear Audio: mono

Hi-Fi AFM Audio: stereo

Tuning Method: frequency synthesis

Channel Selectors: up/down scan on VCR; scan plus keypad direct access on remote

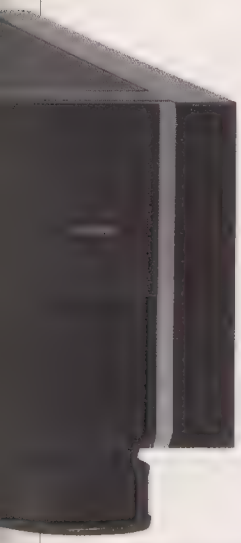
Preset Method: automatic plus add and erase

Cable Tuning Range: 1-125—A-8 to A-1, 2 to 13, A to W, AA to ZZ, plus 56 more

Special Features: automatic assemble editing, synchro edit, digital effects including memory recall, paint art, strobe, negative/positive, wipe, fade, color fade, color corrector and digital superimpose; titler with four type sizes, eight background colors, eight letter colors; and a scanner for recording graphics from hard copy, a flying erase head, still frame, frame advance, reverse play, audio dub, video dub, insert edit, auto rewind, AFT, channel lock, auto channel change

Accessories: remote control with batteries, 75-ohm antenna cable and matching transformer, audio-video cable, S-video cable,

VIDEOTEST PHOTOGRAPHS: LES MORSILLO



Electronic Eye: Toshiba's SV-R990 Super VHS VCR includes a video scanner (above) for inserting graphics directly onto videotape.

nese and is often difficult to decipher.

Description. The SV-R990 is styled in a handsome mixture of black and titanium gray with touches of silver and gold. Its simulated rosewood side panels may be removed so the deck will fit narrow spaces. Its front panel has discrete indicators for Super VHS, digital noise reduction (DNR) and digital tracking, full analog meters for left and right audio channels and a multifunction display.

The front panel swings down to reveal the cassette hatch and a variety of controls. The eject button is to the left of the hatch. To the right are a button for DNR, rotary controls for picture

continued on page 108

synchro-edit connection cable, optical video scanner

RESULTS

Horizontal Resolution: S-VHS—400 lines, VHS—240 lines

Video S/N, Unweighted: SP—48.4 dB; EP—46.8 dB

Video S/N, Weighted: SP—52.6 dB; EP—51.5 dB

Luminance S/N, Unweighted: SP—45.8 dB; EP—46.2 dB

Luminance S/N, Weighted: SP—53.4 dB; EP—52.9 dB

S/N, Chroma AM: SP—47.9 dB; EP—40.6 dB

S/N, Chroma PM: SP—40.7 dB; EP—36.8 dB

Audio Frequency Response: hi-fi—20 Hz-20 kHz, +1.2/-0.5 dB; linear (-3 dB)—80 Hz-10 kHz, SP; 80 Hz-6.3 kHz, EP

Hi-Fi Dynamic Range: 88.6 dB

Linear Audio S/N: 43.1 dB

Audio Distortion: hi-fi—0.4%; linear—1.2%

RATINGS

Picture Quality: excellent

Audio Quality: very good/excellent

Operational Ease: good/excellent

Overall Performance: very good/excellent

VIDEOTEST NUMBER 517

GE VHS camcorder

General Electric's latest camcorder has a new twist to improve low-light performance—digital technology. The VHS HQ CG-9920's gain up function digitally stores and records a picture composed of ten separate images collected at the normal scan rate of 60 fields per second. The result is a picture that's ten times as bright as it would have been.

The digital circuitry may also be used to perform a curtain wipe from a stored image to a live picture, a box wipe that replaces the still image from the center, or a lap dissolve in which the still image fades out while a live picture fades in. A strobe function lets you record action as a series of stills, while an image mix function lets you select a still, superimpose a live picture, split the screen horizontally, put live or still shots in a center box or put a part of the still image in the upper left or lower right corner and return to the still.

Non-digital options include 1/500- and 1/1000-second high speed shutter settings for crisper still images, a self-timer that can record a 10-second burst or run to the end of the tape, time lapse recording (one second every 50 seconds), a hold-down fade button and date/time recording. Other useful features are auto/manual focus, auto/fixed white balance, auto/manual iris, record review, camera edit (edit search), a flying erase head, audio and video dub, auto index, synchro edit and macro. You can focus down to two feet from the lens without entering macro mode.

Description. The black and gray CG-9920 looks like many other VHS camcorders. On the body's right side are the cassette door, jacks for an external microphone and a fixed grip with a strap that goes around the back of your hand. Above is a wide angle/tele rocker and a secondary run/pause button you can operate with a pinky. The main run/pause button, at the back of the grip, can be accessed with a thumb.

Atop the body is a carrying handle, an accessory shoe and loops for a shoulder strap. Along the left side are a slider for power, a red stop/eject button and a sliding cover/switch that is kept closed for camera operation, partially open for camera edit mode and fully open for VCR playing and recording with an external source. Camera edit mode exposes buttons for play, rewind/scan and fast forward/scan for easy selection of in-camera edit points. The VCR mode adds buttons for pause/still, record and dub.

Above the camera section, a viewfinder swivels out of the way for carrying and stowage. The viewing hood swings through 180 degrees from straight up to straight down for easy high- and low-angle shooting. The hood has a fixed magnifier that can flip out of the way for viewing at greater distances. You can focus the finder head's secondary magnifier for viewing with or without the hood. ▶

Night Owl: General Electric's CG-9920 VHS camcorder uses digital circuitry to allow recording in 1 lux light.

GE CAMCORDER

continued from previous page

At the back of the finder is a brightness control. A technician's control for electrical focus is on the underside.

The left side of the body has a small ear-level speaker. Near the top front is a covered jack for an optional character generator and a wind noise switch. On the side of the camera projection are two groups of controls. The upper group includes the fade button, switches for auto/manual focus and auto/fixed white balance, slide switches for the high-speed shutter and self-timer/time lapse, and a rotary iris control.

The lower group has indicators for memory, gain up, strobe, wipe and image mix plus buttons for gain up, strobe, wipe, image mix still, image mix select and an "off" switch for the wipe and mix options. Under the lens are buttons for date/time, select, set, counter display/memory/lap-time/time-remaining, counter reset and record review. On the lens are manual focus and zoom rings; a release for the macro range is on the zoom lever. Under the front of the lens is a window for the infrared autofocus.

The rear panel has a volume control for the speaker, up and down buttons for tracking, the remote/synchro edit jack, the battery compartment, a battery eject button and a multipin adapter jack. The AC adapter plugs into the adapter jack for AC operation. It also lets you charge the battery in the camcorder and use the audio and video inputs and outputs and

GE CG-9920 VHS Camcorder

DATA

Suggested Price: $1,899

Weight: 5.3 pounds without battery or cassette

Dimensions: 8-3/8 x 4-3/4 x 15-5/8 inches (h/w/d)

Power Requirements: camcorder—12 VDC; AC adapter/charger—110/120/220/240 VAC, 50/60 Hz

Power Consumption: camcorder—14 W; AC adapter—40 W

Image Sensor: 1/2-inch CCD

Lens: f/1.2, 8x (8.5-68mm) power zoom with macro

Filter Diameter: 49mm

Minimum Focusing Distance: 2 feet

Autofocus: infrared, switchable to manual with one-shot AF

Minimum Illumination: rated—5 lux; 1 lux with gain up; measured—6.1 lux for 50 IRE; 1.4 lux for 50 IRE with gain up

Iris: auto, switchable to manual

Sensitivity: normal/gain up

Auto Fade: hold-down type

Shutter: normal, 1/500-, 1/1000-sec.

White Balance: auto, switchable to indoor or outdoor

Viewfinder: electronic with onscreen indicators for battery condition, date, time, tape counter, memory, lap counter, time remaining, high-speed shutter, manual white balance, gain up, wipe option, image mix display, stored still picture, self-timer, time lapse, dew, index, missing tape tab and transport function

Viewfinder Controls: diopter focus, brightness and electrical focus

VCR Controls: all—dub, record, pause/still, rewind (search), play and fast forward (search)

Microphone: electret condenser with wind buffer (noise) switch

Jacks: external mic, synchro edit/remote, adapter and character generator

Tape Format: VHS HQ

Tape Speed: SP

Video Heads: 4

Record Effects: wipe—curtain, center and cross fade; image mix—stored still, overlay, split screen, center still, center live, upper left still, lower right still and time lapse; strobe

Cue & Review (Search): 3x

Fast Forward/Rewind Time: 9 min. for T-120

Remote: optional wired remote pause with indicator

Counter Digits: 4, or elapsed time or time remaining

Program Start Locator/Index/Cue: records but does not read index marks

Linear Audio: mono

Special Features: flying erase head, still frame, separate eject, counter memory, audio dub, video dub, insert edit, auto rewind

Absent Features: frame advance, slow motion, speed play, hi-fi audio

Accessories: two-hour battery, AC adapter/charger, audio/video output adapter, audio/video cable, shoulder strap, antenna cable and antenna transformer

RESULTS

Horizontal Resolution: 240-250 lines

Video S/N, Unweighted: 48.6 dB

Video S/N, Weighted: 55.6 dB

Chroma AM S/N: 49.9 dB

Chroma PM S/N: 46.3 dB

Audio Frequency Response: 100 Hz-10 kHz, -3 dB

S/N, Audio: 42.6 dB

Audio Distortion: 1.2%

RATINGS

Picture Quality: excellent for VHS

Audio Quality: very good

Operational Ease: excellent

Overall Performance: very good/excellent for VHS

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Your IMAGE TRANSLATOR will pay for itself rapidly by eliminating costly tape conversions. For more information: INSTANT REPLAY, 2951 S. Bayshore Drive, Suite 8E, Miami, FL 33133 Phone: (305) 448-7088, Fax: (305) 445-1998

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RF output. The bottom has a tripod socket and a compartment for the clock battery.

Operation. The CG-9920 has no operational quirks that require explanation—an experienced video buff might even get away with not reading the manual. The gain up option for low-light recording turns on and off with successive pushes of the button. Since it uses the camcorder's field memory, you can't use it in tandem with the strobe, wipe or mix effects. No two options that require memory can be used at the same time.

GE's low-lux camcorder has a digital gain up function for recording in virtual darkness.

The wipe button not only allows selection of various wipes, but automatically saves the last frame of the scene for wiping to the next shot. Press the "off" button to get out of the wipe and image mix modes. For image mix effects, use the select button to memorize a still and choose a mix option. All the digital effects can be operated intuitively, and other functions run much as you would expect.

Thanks to its speaker, you can monitor audio as you shoot without using a cumbersome earplug. The addition of a secondary magnifier lets the camcorder work almost like a battery-powered black-&-white TVCR. Ease of operation is excellent—you can learn to distinguish the controls by touch.

Performance. The CG-9920's low-light capability does not come without a price. Because the gain up function gradually builds up enough light to form an image, it does not deliver crisp, clean pictures of moving objects. But given a choice between a small blur and no image at all, we'll take the small blur every time. You can, however, take sharp, colorful pictures of stationary objects in light as low as 1 lux.

The camcorder records and plays only at the SP speed. Its video performance (including digital effects) is quite impressive. Horizontal resolution is 240 to 250 lines with an unweighted video signal-to-noise ratio of 48.8 (44.4) dB. The weighted video S/N is 55.6 (48) dB while chroma AM S/N is 49.9 (44.5) dB and chroma PM S/N is 46.3 (44.4) dB. (See "Editor's Note" on page 50 for an explanation of the results in parenthesis.) Video performance is excellent compared to other VHS HQ camcorders.

Audio frequency response is 100 Hertz to 10 kilohertz at the -3 dB points with an audio S/N of 42.6 dB and a total harmonic distortion of 1.2 percent. The wind filter reduces that annoying roar. We recommend a directional or wireless mic when your subject is far away. Audio performance is very good for a mono linear-track machine.

Conclusion. The CG-9920 has many desirable digital features. The gain up function competes with the scene transition effects for top honors. Video performance and ease of operation are excellent while audio performance is very good. Thus it earns an overall rating of very good/excellent. Its suggested price of $1,899 is comparable to that of other camcorders with similar capabilities. We recommend it highly. ■

TECH TIPS

Laser locker

Like record turntables, many videodisc players come with special transit screws designed to lock up the delicate laser assembly when the player is shipped. If your player doesn't have a slot to store this easily misplaced screw, tape it to the back or bottom of the player so the screw will be at hand when moving time comes.

Adjustment shortcut

If you have a big-screen TV and a VCR that share a cabinet, you can more easily check picture adjustments by plugging an inexpensive tiny screen, like a three-inch Sony Watchman, into the VCR. Any adjustments, especially for tracking, viewed on the small screen will hold true for the larger one as well—and you won't have to continually step back far enough to check out the large screen.

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VIDEOTESTS

Both Sides Now: Pioneer's CLD-91 combi deck offers continuous play of two-sided videodiscs.

VIDEOTEST NUMBER 518

Pioneer Elite deluxe combi player

Introduced in 1987, Pioneer's LD-S1 set new standards among laserdisc players. The company's new top-of-the-line model, the CLD-91, raises standards once again. It not only offers state-of-the-art performance and special effects, but plays all laser-read media (including CDs) and lets viewers watch both sides of a laserdisc without turning the disc over. It also employs a digital time base corrector operating at four times the horizontal frequency and an S-video output (also separated at 4 times the horizontal frequency) for improved picture quality.

The CLD-91's digital audio is enhanced by eight times oversampling and an 18-bit twin digital-to-analog converter. As a result, low-pass filtering is unnecessary, distortion is low and channel separation is high. Other attractive features include a file function that memorizes up to 140 selections complete with messages, an intro scan function that plays the first eight seconds of each chapter on a disc, still picture with sound, strobe motion, one-shot picture memory, solarization, multi-image, picture art and a last memory function that returns you to the point on a disc at which the player was last stopped.

The jog/shuttle dial and chapter/track, frame/time and memory search make it very easy to quickly locate desired segments of a disc, while displays on the player and on the screen help you keep track of where you are and the mode you're in. Random and programmed play modes let you rearrange selections to suit your taste.

Description. The CLD-91 is black with gold trim and rosewood sides. A large disc drawer occupies most of the front panel. Toward the right are a jog/shuttle dial, direction indicators, a remote control sensor and buttons for stop/eject and play/still. The outer surface of the door has a large display area and buttons for random play, auto program edit, intro scan, program, clear, side A, side B, memory, +10 and a 10-digit keypad. Buttons for power, display off, file and chapter/track skip forward and reverse are below the door. The unit sits upon gold colored feet.

The CLD-91's bottom is honeycombed for rigidity. The rear has connectors for optical digital output, S-video outputs, two sets of video and stereo audio outputs, an input and output for Pioneer's SR remote control relay system, a power cord and a transit screw that must be removed for normal operation. Save the transit screw; you will need it to protect the delicate mechanism anytime the player is moved.

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Editor's Note

Just as video components continue to improve, so do our "Videotests." This month we introduce a new, more useful means of measuring signal-to-noise ratios. While our test equipment remains the same, we have adjusted the settings to filter out low frequency noise below 10 kilohertz when measuring video luminance S/N ratios. Such noise has little visible effect on a picture. Omitting this range yields slightly higher S/N figures and a wider spread between the best and the poorest machines.

In measuring chroma S/N ratios, we will cover low frequency noise down to 100 Hertz, instead of our prior level of 50 kHz, because low frequency color noise is more easily discernible. Overall, the new settings generate S/N ratios that more closely correspond to the human eye's perceptions of a picture's quality, as well as to filter settings used by the broadcast and engineering communities.

For readers who wish to compare S/N ratios from the old and the new settings, "Videotests" for this and the coming two months will include two sets of S/N numbers in the text. The numbers in parenthesis represent decibel values obtained with previous settings. —LB

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VIDEOTESTS

Disc Jockey: The Sony MDP-510 combi player's custom index function lets viewers mark up to six points on a videodisc for recall.

VIDEOTEST NUMBER 519

Sony combi player with digital effects

Sony's new top-of-the-line combination player, the MDP-510, offers modest design and feature improvements over the company's previous top model. More important, however, is the change in price: The MDP-510 costs $300 less than its predecessor. It accepts all laser-read discs, including 12- and eight-inch LaserDiscs, five-inch CD-Videos and three- and five-inch CDs. Its most unusual feature is a custom index system that lets you mark up to eight points on a disc for subsequent playback.

The 510 includes a variety of useful features. Intro scan accesses the first eight seconds of each chapter or track, while program play lets you customize the order in which selections are played. In shuffle play mode, chapters or tracks play in a random order. Repeat play is also available for segments in the A-B memory and custom indexed segments, as well as for a chapter, a track and a whole side. The AV calendar displays up to 20 selections at a time, and a disc protection system disengages any disc left in the system after the power is turned off.

Digital memory provides stop motion with sound, flash motion, picture art and one-scene memory effects. Multispeed play offers a choice of 11 bidirectional playing speeds, including still, for both CAV and CLV discs. The jog/shuttle can be used for frame-by-frame viewing and to access the step function and various playing speeds.

The 510 switches easily between the audio and video portions of CD-V discs. When the audio portion is playing back, all CD functions are available. When the video portion is playing back, all the functions for CLV discs (except memory stop and time search) are accessible. A scene stored in digital memory may be displayed while the audio portion is playing.

continued on page 116

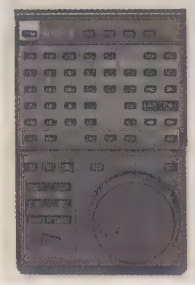
Sony MDP-510 Combi Player

DATA

Suggested Price: $1,100

Weight: 17.9 pounds

Dimensions: 4-3/8 x 17 x 16-1/4 inches (h/w/d)



Power Requirements: 120 VAC, 60 Hz

Power Consumption: 42 W

Disc Formats: all

Play Speed/ Format Select: automatic

Frame Advance: forward and reverse

Multispeed Play: bidirectional—10x, 5x, 3x, 2x, 1x, 1/2x, 1/4x, 1/8x, 1/16x, 1/30x, 1/90x (sound muted except 1x)

Rapid Search: 10 seconds, end to end

Cue & Review Search (Scan): scan buttons—50 seconds, end to end; shuttle ring—120 seconds, end to end

Remote Pause: control S—input and output for remote control commands

Remote: IR wireless with jog/shuttle dial; a jog/shuttle on/off switch with indicator; exposed buttons for play, pause/still, stop, intro scan, CDV switching between video and audio segments, open/close, display, AV time, audio monitor and disc/TV RF switching, exposed forward/reverse rockers for index search, chapter/music sensor search and scan, buttons under flap for program, frame/time, clear, 10-digit keypad, +10, search/next, repeat, auto program, 1/all, index file, shuffle, index mode, repeat A-B, back, CX, analog, one scene memory, recall, auto pause/auto space, picture art, flash motion, stop motion, still/step forward, still/step reverse, multispeed forward and reverse plus rocker for adjusting speed of flash motion or multispeed play

Counter Digits: chapter/track—2; index/step—2; frame—5; time—0:00:00

Counter Memory: stop, A, B and 5 custom indexes

Program Start Locator/Index/Cue: CAV discs—stop codes on disc, chapter/track, index/step, frame number; CLV discs—time

Analog FM Audio: stereo or two independent tracks

Digital Audio: stereo

RESULTS

Horizontal Resolution: 400 lines (limited by software)

Video S/N, Unweighted: 42.3 dB

Video S/N, Weighted: 48.3 dB

Luminance S/N, Unweighted: 40.4 dB

Luminance S/N, Weighted: 48.7 dB

S/N, Chroma AM: 45.1 dB

S/N, Chroma PM: 37.2 dB

Audio Frequency Response: digital—10 Hz-20 kHz, +0.4/-1 dB; analog—20 Hz-20 kHz, +0.0/-3.3 dB

S/N, Audio: digital—98 dB; analog—75 dB

Audio Distortion: digital—0.01%; analog—0.02%

RATINGS

Picture Quality: very good

Audio Quality: excellent

Operational Ease: very good/excellent

Overall Performance: very good/excellent

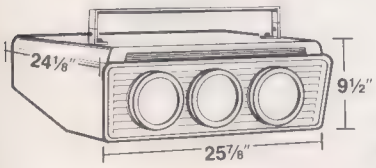
The Space Race Is On...

PULSAR Adds More Room To Rooms
PULSAR's big screen image turns ordinary family rooms into extraordinary in-home theaters. Imagine this: you can get a six foot wide television image in less cubic floor space than the average 27" television. The beauty of the new PULSAR 2040 is that with one compact unit you can vary its crystal clear image size to fit any room, no matter what the shape or size.

Projection TV vs. Big Boxes The public's desire for larger screen television is obvious. Many people have run out and purchased big rear screen boxes only to find that their unit sits like a big lump in the room delivering a mushy image. Over the last 10 years PULSAR has quietly perfected a projection video system that delivers an uncompromising image—the new 2040.

One Tube vs. PULSAR's 2040 Three-Tube Quality PULSAR's three-tube picture authentically mixes a complete spectrum of colors through their exclusive DCS System (Dedicated Color Separation). Simply explained: single tube sets require a black shadow for the background. We've all seen it at close range. PULSAR 2040 uses the white of the projection surface as the background. Thus the image is brighter and sharper.

Why Settle For Less? If compromise is not in your vocabulary—then "PULSAR" must be. For the ultimate in viewing pleasure there is only one name and one standard of quality—PULSAR. Call for the name of the PULSAR dealer in your community. Find out why PULSAR, and only PULSAR, gives you the best seat in the house with nationwide support service.



The new PULSAR 2040 projector is comparatively small and lightweight. With wireless remote control you can easily conceal it under a coffee table or within the ceiling. You can even integrate your current stereo system . . . or add surround sound.

PULSAR is your ticket to in-home theater.

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SPECIAL HOLIDAY ROUNDUP

BY KENNETH KORMAN

WHEN GOOD THINGS COME IN SMALL PACKAGES

From tiny camcorders, screens and VCRs to offbeat gadgets, hi-tech stocking stuffers offer more choices than ever before.

Ties, perfumes and sickly sweet candy canes. Such is the lot of the oft-neglected Christmas stocking and its equally luckless owner. To make matters worse, the lukewarm responses such gifts produce seldom dissuade us from making the same yuletide mistake the following year. Allow us to suggest a break from tradition. It's now possible to enjoy the slickest video gadgets and the latest video programs (including tapes you can make yourself) using products that actually fit into a stocking, albeit a large one. The following suggestions will make any video enthusiast's Christmas a merry, if downsized, event. And not all the gifts will put you in hock. Good things sometimes come in small, inexpensive packages.

Inside every all-star couch potato lies an aspiring, though sometimes dormant, videographer. What better way to help the budding director on your list realize his potential than with a feature-packed compact camcorder? Recent advances have made these small wonders lighter and more user-friendly than ever. Camcorders in two high-resolution formats—Hi8 and Super VHS-C—now complement the standard 8mm and Compact VHS models, multiplying the options for video-savvy Santas.

The latest Hi8 model, Canon's R-660 ($1,949), is geared to the creative needs of small-screen auteurs. Four automated functions let you quickly select focus and zoom settings and store them in digital memory. Using a supplied wireless remote control, you can serve as both the director and the star of your homemade epic. Like all Hi8 machines, the 660 delivers more than 400 lines of horizontal resolution for tremendous picture detail.

The S-VHS-C format reached new heights in '89 with the introduction of JVC's GR-S707U camcorder ($2,499), the first Compact VHS unit of any type to feature hi-fi stereo sound. It also has variable animation and interval timer functions and complete automatic operation. Because it has S-video inputs and outpits, it can serve as either a player or a recorder in an S-VHS editing or dubbing system. It is designed to rest on your shoulder like a full-size camcorder, but weighs pounds less than comparable VHS machines.

Magic Wand: Mitsubishi's PRM-1 remote operates the company's recent color TVs.

The Great Outdoorsman in your life can bring the adventure home with Sony's CCD-SP7 8mm Handycam ($1,850). A water-resistant plastic housing encloses a camcorder with all the features of the CCD-F40 model, including a 6x power zoom, 4 lux low-light sensitivity and a two-page digital superimposer. The SP7 is not designed for underwater use, but should withstand the rigors of the road. How else to document that Peruvian rain forest before it slips away forever?

Bargain hunters need look no further than Panasonic's VHS-C PV-120. At $799, it's one of the least expensive camcorders. Even so, it's no slouch on features: A high-speed shutter can capture the fastest movements on tape, and a flying erase head will have audiences admiring your smooth scene transitions.

Perhaps this year's most dazzling new camcorder is Sony's CCD-TR5 ($1,500). At less than seven inches in length and a little over four inches in width and height, this 28-ounce marvel lends new meaning to the idea of "compact" video hardware. Sony has squeezed a full range of features—automatic focus, white bal-

ance and iris among them—into its tiny shell. Several companies are selling camcorders with the same design and feature package as the TR5: Nikon's VN 910, Kyocera's KD-S530 and Ricoh's R-680 ($1,500 each) all fit the bill.

PERSONAL EFFECTS

Does the object of your holiday affections dream of taking Frankie and Annette to the beach? Maybe that special someone would rather hit the road with Dustin and Tom in *Rain Man*. One of the new personal video products that combine monitors and VCRs in highly portable packages might make the perfect gift for a movie buff on the go.

Hitachi's VT-LC50A ($1,699) integrates a full-featured VHS VCR and a five-inch active matrix LCD screen in a sleek 7.5-pound unit. It runs on standard or rechargeable batteries or on a supplied AC adapter. A built-in speaker delivers monaural sound, but you can listen to hi-fi stereo audio through the LC50's headphone jack. Or consider Sharp's VC-V540U ($1,900), which combines a four-inch LCD screen and VHS VCR in an easy-to-carry box.

The welcome addition of a broadcast TV tuner rounds out Sony's GV-9 8mm TVCR ($1,500). About the size of a large paperback book, the GV-9 also features a one-event/24-hour programmable timer and a four-inch LCD screen. You can enjoy up to two hours of home movies or pre-recorded tapes on a single charge of its nickel cadmium battery. An optional, cigar-shaped CCD camera plugs into the GV-9 for live recording.

FeatherCam: Nikon's VN 910 boasts the smallest, lightest camcorder design yet devised.

Smooth Operator: With Cinema Products Corporation's Personal Steadicam (left) you can shoot jitter-free footage even under adverse conditions.

Picture Shows: Ricoh's XR-M film camera (left) takes sharp snapshots of TV screens, while Sony's GV-9 TVCR (above) provides the ultimate in personal video.

LCD color televisions also came of age in '89 with brighter and sharper pictures than ever. Casio's two-inch TV-400 ($230) has one-touch auto tuning for quickly locating broadcast options, a backlight for viewing in a darkened room or car, and AC, conventional battery and car battery power options. Other Casio models include the four-inch TV-8500 ($450), the 3.3-inch TV-3100 ($400) and the two-inch TV-810 ($250).

Detachable components add versatility to Sony's FDL-330 ($649). A 2.7-inch backlit LCD screen and a separate battery pack snap together for use as a color viewfinder and field monitor when connected to a camcorder. A third section containing a broadcast tuner snaps into place between the first two components for standard TV viewing. A flexible hood minimizes glare.

Magnavox's CK1050CH ($499) features an appealing flip-top design and a high-contrast, three-inch LCD screen that won't strain bleary eyes on Christmas morning. You can adjust color, tint and brightness to taste via onscreen displays, and pick up AM and FM stereo broadcasts with its rotary dial tuner. Preferred channels can be stored for instant recall.

TENACIOUS TUBES

LCD screens may be the talk of the town, but miniature tube TVs are far from finished as a viable option for adventurous gift-givers. In fact, many of this season's best bargains come in the form of tiny tube sets intended for desktops and nightstands. Handheld units will also let you while away the hours on those long, post-holiday lines for returning all those less useful gifts. ▶

GOOD THINGS

Magnavox offers no less than seven models with 4.5- or five-inch screens. The black-&-white BH3908 ($90) and the BX3911 ($80) allow a choice of AC, DC or car battery operation. The 3908 has an AM/FM radio, while the 3911 sports a space-age design. The CJ3922 and CJ3923 ($260 each) add color pictures and audio/video inputs for use with VCRs. Kitchen dwellers will appreciate the BG3914 TV/clock radio ($120). It can be mounted underneath a cabinet to save space and includes a green fluorescent clock display and a countdown timer with a buzzer. Don't let those Christmas cookies burn.

If it's small, Sony has it, and tube TVs are no exception. The FD-10A Watchman ($119) has a two-inch recessed black-&-white screen and runs on AA standard or rechargeable batteries. The 2.7-inch FD-230 ($149) can also run on AC or car battery power. The 230's optional external battery case holds four C batteries for up to seven hours of cordless viewing.

The FD-500 ($159) has a 4.5-inch black-&-white screen and an AM/FM radio. Its two-watt audio amplifier and four-inch speaker let the whole family join in. DC operation requires eight D batteries. The KVX-370 Watchcube ($499) employs high-tech beam indexing tube technology for its 3.7-inch color screen. You can wake to Willard Scott's heartfelt holiday cheer with the 370's built-in alarm clock.

Panasonic's portable PV-M749 ($1,099) places a seven-inch tube TV above a very small VHS VCR. The luxury of a 23-function wireless remote is standard, as are a sleep timer, onscreen displays and audio/video inputs and outputs. The VCR's four video heads deliver clean slow motion and still frame effects.

OFF THE BEATEN PATH

What to give the man or woman who has it all? Try an introduction to the wonderful world of car video.

No Strings Attached: Azden's WMS-PRO wireless microphone system (left) has a range of 250 feet, while Sharp's VC-540U TVCR (above) offers unlimited portability.

Hitachi engineered its MCM-5 five-inch LCD monitor and VP-F1 VHS cassette player ($2,995 for the pair) with vehicular videophiles in mind. Present applications are limited to fulfilling your mobile entertainment needs, but future uses may include navigational tools and instrument or systems monitoring.

And don't worry about a loved one veering off the road in a video-induced trance. The system prohibits playing back a video signal while the car is moving. You can deactivate this "interlock" feature if the screen is mounted so the driver can't see it.

Does the serious videographer in your family quake at the thought of jittery handheld footage? If so, Cinema Products Corporation's Personal Steadicam ($549) may prove the ultimate present. Based on the $40,000, Oscar-winning Steadicam for film cameras (which helped create realistic action in movies like *Return of the Jedi* and *The Shining*), the Personal Steadicam lets you shoot video under virtually any conditions—running, jumping or following your subject over hill and dale.

The 2.2-pound device, which fits just underneath an 8mm or VHS-C camcorder, achieves this feat through a

On the Air: Koss' JCK/300 wireless headphones (above) and Sony's FD-500 TV/AM/FM radio (above right).

Sound Hound: JVC's feature-laden GR-S707U Super VHS-C camcorder is the first Compact VHS machine to record and play back hi-fi stereo audio.

complex system of properly distributed weight and mass. It also includes a 3.5-inch monochrome monitor for checking action as it happens, plus a light, tiny halogen lamp that runs on the Steadicam's batteries. Home movies never had it so good.

Suppose your loved one bought the latest hi-fi VCR after reading about its brilliant, lifelike sound, only to discover an external amplifier and speakers are needed to make the deck sing. Come to the rescue with a pair of Bose Video Roommate Speakers ($339). Complete with their own built-in amplifier, the speakers deliver respectable hi-fi sound despite a diminutive size. And shielded magnets let you place the speakers close to a TV without distorting the picture.

Do your grandparents sound skeptical when you promise you've taken good care of yourself? A picture's worth a thousand words of protest when you have two Mitsubishi VisiTel visual telephones ($399 each) — one for granny's house and one for yours. Using a built-in camera, the VisiTel transmits a black-&-white still video image over standard phone lines. Your smiling mug, which can be refreshed every 5.5 seconds, shows up on a 4.5-inch monitor — and you can preview the image before deciding whether to send it out.

A trio of photographic film cameras from Ricoh — the XR-M ($600), the Shotmaster Zoom ($425) and the FF-7 ($287) — all boast one unique feature of considerable interest to videoholics. Using a special TV mode that synchronizes the camera's shutter speed with the scan rate of a TV or a computer monitor, you can snap sharp pictures of anything that appears onscreen. Standard cameras are not up to this task: Annoying horizontal lines normally mar any effort to photograph computer or television pictures.

Roadsters: Hitachi's VP-F1 VHS player (right) and MCM-5 LCD monitor (above) constitute one of the first car video systems.

Accessories often provide the crowning touch for a first-rate A/V system or camcorder, often without putting too big a strain on dwindling holiday budgets. Sima's CamPocket ($34.95), a nylon holster for 8mm and VHS-C camcorders, keeps you ready for those once-in-a-lifetime shots. Norbern's CamTunes ($50) is a small device that allows you to record music from any portable

continued on page 141

Picture This: Mitsubishi's VisiTel visual telephone (left) transmits video images over phone lines, while Bose's Video Roommate Speakers (above) deliver hi-fi sound without an external amp.

A NEW COMEDY BY ROB REINER

BILLY CRYSTAL MEG RYAN

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two friends
sleep
together
and
still love
each other
in the
morning?

**"It's Wonderful!
Romantic And Funny!"**

—Joel Siegel, WABC-TV

**"A Buoyant Comedy!
Contains What May Be
The Year's Single
Most Uproarious Scene."**

—Gene Shalit, THE TODAY SHOW, NBC-TV

***"A Comic Valentine
To Love And Friendship"***

—TIME MAGAZINE

When Harry Met Sally...

ORION

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For additional information circle No. 26 on Reader Service Card

BY MARK FLEISCHMANN

TAPES & DISCS YULE LOVE

Under-$30 movies guaranteed to take the pain out of last-minute shopping.

For something that happens every year, the holiday gift-giving season catches a lot of people by surprise. As if in a movie, calendar leaves flutter and disappear until, suddenly, it's December 23—and you still have not gotten anything for your demanding aunt, your pesky nephew or your expectant kids.

Fortunately, inexpensive pre-recorded tapes and videodiscs are more plentiful than ever. They make great last-minute stocking stuffers, and offer so much variety you'll run out of relatives long before stores run out of stock. But the secret of memorable gift-giving is matching the right present (or tape) to each recipient and the problem, when it comes to movies, is that everyone has a special taste.

Nevertheless, this season's video programming should satisfy even the oddest proclivities (as represented below by the comments in italics). Our recommendations, which follow these comments, run the gamut from comedies and dramas to documentaries and instructionals. All but two cost under $30, and a surprising number are available on 8mm tape (see accompanying story) and LaserVision discs.

Oz Bound: Judy Garland with Ray Bolger in the 50th anniversary edition of *The Wizard of Oz.*

FOR THE FAMILY

"I don't know what it is, but sometimes I get an unaccountable urge to put on a cape and fight crime." This is clearly a case for *Batman* (Warner), now hitting stores for a reasonable $24.98 following its sensational summer run. Tim Burton's take on the dark knight is closer to the comic-book original than the Adam West TV version. The tape should pique the interest of crime-fighters of all ages.

"They don't make movies like they used to." True, but they sure know how to market them like crazy, and *The Wizard*

Christmas Quintet: Old and new classics on affordable tapes include (from top) *The Red Shoes* with Moira Shearer, *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* with Bob Hoskins, Alfred Hitchcock's *Suspicion*, Orson Welles' *Citizen Kane*, and *Gunga Din* with Cary Grant.

YULE LOVE

More affordable films than ever are appearing in VHS, 8mm & on disc.

of Oz—in MGM/UA's colorful new transfer—is the bargain of the season for $24.95. "Over the Rainbow" and "If I Only Had a Brain" are as fresh today as when Judy Garland and Ray Bolger first sang them. As a bonus, the tape includes 17 minutes of *Oz* outtakes and related clips.

"Watching Arnold Schwarzenegger crush a skull is fine, but sometimes I'd like to watch something kinder and gentler." Give this yearner the gift of *Bambi*. At $26.99, from Disney, this animated classic about the life of a fawn won't add much to anyone's budget deficit while inducing a warm, fuzzy feeling and one or two tears.

"Gee, I don't know. I was hoping for something tougher and weirder." Maybe Disney's *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* would be a good compromise candidate, with its surreal combination of animation and live action. Bob Hoskins, known for his role in *Mona Lisa*, plays a human detective surrounded by Toons.

"Daddy, who was Martin Luther King?" Show this inquiring mind the King installment of MPI's *The Speeches Collection*, a valuable trio of tapes for $19.95 each that includes Dr. King's famous "I have a dream" speech. Another tape stars JFK.

"Everybody has a great time at Christmas except me. All this glitter and music—what does it mean?" Let this prematurely angst-ridden child find solace with his animated soul brother in *A Charlie Brown Christmas* (Hi-Tops, $14.95), one of the few Christmas entertainments to meditate on the holiday's true meaning.

"Come on, Mom. Cut that Charlie Brown crap! I wanna watch something violent." Safely sate the little monster with *Road Runner vs. Wile E. Coyote: The Classic Chase* ($14.95), which is just one installment in two inexpensive collections of the Warner cartoon classics. They're ultraviolent *and* artistically respectable.

FOR GROWNUPS

"Get me something good or I'll tie you down and stick French fries up your nose." Obviously this fiendish friend heavily identifies with the Kevin Kline character in John Cleese's hysterical caper comedy *A Fish Called Wanda* (CBS/Fox, $19.98), also starring Jamie Lee Curtis and Michael Palin. Heed the hint if you value your nostrils.

"None of these newfangled James Bonds are as good as the old Bond. Why doesn't Sean Connery do it anymore?" Because he's too busy turning in sterling performances in movies like *The Untouchables* (Paramount, $19.95), with Kevin Costner. This action-packed tribute to gangbuster Elliot Ness possesses the added virtues of elegant camera work and a literate script.

"Bills, bills, bills. Four years of college and no one ever taught me how to manage money. How will I ever get ahead?" *Money Magazine* has some helpful tips in HBO's *Making Your Money Count*, a straight-talking how-to on the ins and outs of personal finance, and the $9.95 price won't strain your resources.

"Tastelessness, everywhere. God, I'm sick of it. What I'd give for an evening of elegant entertainment." Swell idea! Give your disgruntled one a double feature starting with Woody Allen's *Hannah and*

Out to Lunch: Danny DeVito phones home in *Throw Momma from the Train* (above), while Ronald Colman (center, right) in *Lost Horizon* experiences dinner in Shangri-La.

Pieces Of Eight

What Christmas trip would be complete without a few hours of personal video? If you're taking your 8mm camcorder anyway, why not use it to play back as well as to record? You may be surprised to learn that the 8mm format now affords nearly 1,400 programming options.

Almost 400 are in the Cinema 8 catalogue, which encompasses drama, comedy, adventure, musicals, horror, sci-fi, sports, instructionals, kidvid, and movie classics. Its films include *The Last Emperor, River's Edge, This Is Spinal Tap, Play It Again, Sam, Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome, Meet Me in St. Louis, Jason and the Argonauts, Citizen Kane*, and something called *Eat This—The Video*, a cooking tape with Dom DeLuise. Prices range from

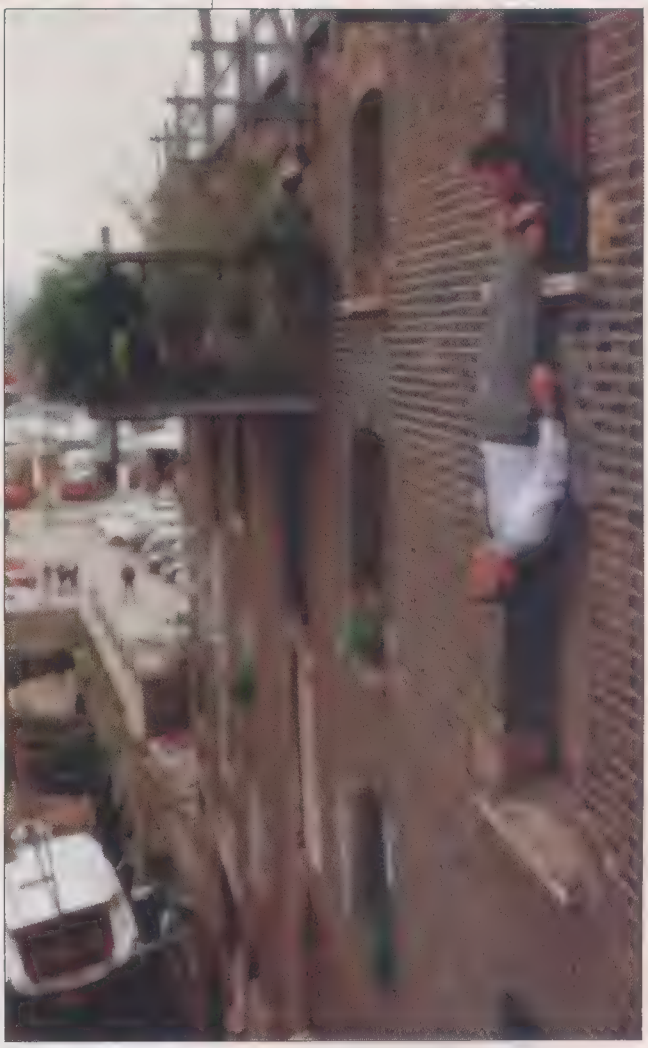
Rib Ticklers: Ray Harryhausen's skeletal warriors go on the attack in *Jason and the Argonauts*.

Her Sisters (HBO, $19.99). This is civilized comic drama—starring Allen, Barbara Hershey, Dianne Wiest and Mia Farrow. It follows a trio of sisters and their overlapping relationships. Then move on to Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers—elegance doubly personified—in either *Swing Time, Shall We Dance,* or *Top Hat.* These dance classics are available individually for $19.98 or as a set for $59.98 from Turner Home Entertainment.

"I don't know what it is, but sometimes I get an urge to off my mom." Help this potential wacko sublimate his impulses with Orion's *Throw Momma from the Train* ($19.98), starring Billy Crystal and the late Anne Ramsey (who died of natural causes). Despite its premise, the film has energy, wit and a frantic Danny DeVito.

"Of course I do the cooking. Hand me the Pampers, will you?" Mr. Mom (Vestron, $14.98), starring Michael Keaton as the househusband, will make this fellow feel more comfortable in his alternate lifestyle.

Tutu Divine: Judy Garland belts out a classic in *Meet Me in St. Louis* (top), while the Bolshoi Ballet interprets *Swan Lake* for Western eyes (above).



Cleese Call: John Cleese works on his memory in *A Fish Called Wanda.*

"I don't want to watch that version. It's missing three seconds of dialogue at the reel change." No film purist could resist RCA/Columbia's restored versions of David Lean's *Lawrence of Arabia* ($29.95), with Peter O'Toole in the title role, and Frank Capra's *Lost Horizon* ($19.95), with Ronald Colman as a man who finds Shangri-La and the meaning of life in the high Himalayas. Both feature footage once thought lost and high-quality transfers.

"Daddy, how come you break up every time the Rain Man says 'Who's on first'?" Enlighten this culturally deprived whelp with *Abbott & Costello Live* (Warner, $19.98), which includes the famous "Who's on first" routine. (*Rain Man* is also on tape, but at a costlier $89.95.)

"Now, the best Dickens story is that one with Alastair Sim. But it's on too late!" Grandma can still view the best-loved version of *A Christmas Carol* (1951) with Sim as Scrooge any time she wants if some smart grandchild gives her VCI's $14.95 tape.

"I don't want to watch "It's a Wonderful Life" in tacky computer colors!" Let the film buff observe the monochrome proprieties with the proper black & white version, while the yahoo enjoys Jimmy Stewart's immortal role in the Crayola-tinted update. Republic offers each for $19.95. A true pro-choice approach.

"You can have Kevin Costner. Give me an old-fashioned kind of guy who looks good in a tux." Nobody ever looked better in a tux than Cary Grant, the man

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$19.95 to 34.95 (call 800-446-6388 for more information).

Film buffs can forage for treasures with Video Images, which has a bulging 1,020-title 8mm catalogue. Hollywood classics, like Chaplin's *The Gold Rush* and Griffith's *Birth of a Nation,* share space with foreign classics, like *Hiroshima Mon Amour* and *The Rules of the Game.* But Video Images also carries gems from TV's golden age (including a couple of Ernie Kovacs shows) and offbeat items like *Richard Nixon: Checkers, Old Glory, Resignation.* Prices go as high as $69.95, but titles in the $24.95 to $29.95 range are plentiful (call 800-243-0987 for further information). —**MF**

War Game: Christian Bale in *Empire of the Sun.*

BY JAMI BERNARD

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

What to get stars for Christmas? Grace Jones prefers Blondes.

Even celebrities with videos of their own have wish lists for the holidays. We asked 13 stars of screen, stage and the tube what three films each would most like to find awaiting them at home this season, gift-wrapped with their name on the card. Here's what they told us:

AL PACINO, Superstar

"There are so many," fretted the former Don Corleone, before naming *The Battle of Algiers* and Ermanno Olmi's *The Tree of Wooden Clogs*. His third choice? "It's a toss-up between Abel Gance's *Napoleon* and *Star Wars*."

MICHAEL SPINKS, Contender

The gap-toothed boxer, recently flattened by the ferocious Mike Tyson, would like to recuperate with *Coming to America*, *Speed Zone* (in which he has a small part) and the latest *Nightmare on Elm Street* ("I don't know what number they're up to").

SHARI LEWIS, Puppeteer

Shari and Lambchop like to check out the competition, so they requested three Jim Henson movies: *Emmett Otto's Jug Band Christmas*, *The Muppets Take Manhattan* and *The Muppet Movie*. "They're all examples of puppetry as an art form, and at its best."

GRACE JONES, Singer

This club queen and Bond foe wants Janet Jackson's *Rhythm Nation: 1814*, Marilyn Monroe's *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* and the X-rated *Jeff Stryker Strikes Again*.

LARRY "BUD" MELMAN, Comic

Not content with his own *Couch Potato Workout*, David Letterman's strange

Tale of the Tapes: Shari Lewis and Lambchops, *Eight Men Out*'s John Sayles, *Late Night* regular Larry "Bud" Melman and Michael Spinks.

SCOTT POLLACK

Late Night regular would like to get comfortable with *The Philadelphia Story, Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* and *Destry Rides Again* (I *looove* Jimmy Stewart").

DEE WALLACE, E.T.'s Mom

The actress who starred in *E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial* may be the only person in America who doesn't already have a copy on video—but she wants one. She'd also like *Dominick and Eugene* and, for her year-old baby girl, *Sesame Street's Count It Higher.*

DICK VAN PATTEN, Sitcom Dad

After *Eight Is Enough* wasn't any longer, this character actor tried another racquet, one result of which was *Dirty Tennis*, a guide to the trickier side of winning. Nevertheless, Patten hopes his net mates will present him with Mel Brooks' *Spaceballs, The Godfather* and Alec Guinness' *The Man in the White Suit*—"one of my all-time favorites."

MAYIM BIALIK, Child Prodigy

The young actress who won acclaim for playing Bette Midler as a kid in *Beaches* is setting her cap for *The Never-Ending Story, White Knights* and *Lady in White*. If these don't come through, she'll settle for "a documentary on whales or functions of the body—that kind of thing."

JOHN SAYLES, Writer/Director

The gifted director of *Eight Men Out* and *Brother from Another Planet* would like to be gifted with *Mean Streets, The Tree of Wooden Clogs* and "a really good video" of Kurosawa's *Yojimbo*. "I do a lot of home taping, so I actually have a lot of things, but sometimes they're not the best quality."

MICHAEL DAMIAN, Hunk

As crooner Danny Romalotti in *The Young and the Restless*, this daytime thespian wants *Batman, Field of Dreams* and, if it gets to video in time, *When Harry Met Sally....*

JACKIE MASON, Comedian

For Hanukkah, the star of ABC's *Chicken Soup* wants the fast-paced Billy Wilder farce *One, Two, Three* with James Cagney, *How Green Was My Valley* and *Citizen Kane*. For Christmas, Mason wants "every copy of *Caddyshack II* (in which he appeared) taken out of stores so people shouldn't see how bad the picture stunk."

JOHN GOODMAN, Actor

Roseanne Barr's television husband started his wish list with *Debbie Does...*, then changed his mind and settled on John Ford's *The Searchers* and *The Godfather, Parts I* and *II*.

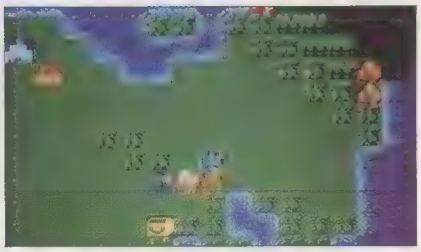
KOOL MOE DEE, Rapper

The rap singer who made "I Go to Work" a hit (and holds a bachelor's degree) wants Richard Pryor's *Which Way Is Up?, West Side Story* and Bill Cosby's *Uptown Saturday Night.* ■

Video Shop Quartet: *Sea of Love's Al Pacino*, actor John Goodman, *Chicken Soup*'s Jackie Mason and club queen Grace Jones.

BY LOU KESTEN

GIFT-GIVING GAMESMANSHIP



A connoisseur's guide to 1989's most entertaining cartridges.

By the end of this year, more than 20 million American households will have videogames. The Nintendo Entertainment System (NES), with the lion's share of this market, dominated toy sales throughout 1988 and 1989. But if you gave someone an NES or a Sega Master System last year for Christmas, you may be wondering what to do for an encore.

Videogame cartridges provide the perfect solution. Hundreds of new games are on the shelves, and at the $25 to $50 prices they command, no gamer would be unhappy to see a new cartridge under the tree. But with so many titles available, it's hard to pick something the Nintendo or Sega nut in your life is sure to enjoy. Since many video stores now offer game rentals, you can try some titles before you buy. However, many of the newest Nintendo titles probably will not be easy to rent before Christmas.

Of course, you could really dazzle your loved ones with one of the new 16-bit game machines soon to come from NEC and Sega (see "Game Wars," Oct. '89). Although we were only able to play briefly with the NEC TurboGrafx-16 and the Sega Genesis as of presstime, we were impressed by several NEC titles. *Alien Crush* is a spectacular pinball game with beautiful H.R. Giger-inspired graphics and clever bonus rounds. *Legendary Axe* shows off the system's graphics in a multilevel battle to defeat an evil sorcerer. *R-Type* is an astonishingly accurate translation of the outer space shoot-'em-up popular in arcades, while *Victory Run* is a driving game with continually changing scenery and varying playing conditions.

For the Genesis, *Tommy Lasorda Baseball* offers one of the most detailed sports simulations yet. *Super Thunder Blade, Altered Beast* and *Space Harrier II* are as close to their arcade forebears as any gamer could wish. *The Last Battle* and *Ghouls and Ghosts* boast gorgeous graphics and sophisticated gameplay.

But until America embraces these slick new systems, the biggest software hits will be found among games intended for the NES and the Sega Master System. Below are our choices for the most entertaining cartridges of 1989.

Last Christmas, the "must-have" games for the NES were *Zelda II: The*

Epic Struggles: FCI's role-playing fantasy *Ultima* (above) features a series of complex traps and dungeons, while Sega's *Altered Beast* (right) is a home translation of the arcade smash.

Lou Kesten is features editor of Games *magazine.*

Adventure of Link and *Super Mario Bros. 2*. This year, you can expect your kids to beg for Nintendo's *Dragon Warrior*. This adventure is a step up from the role-playing/arcade mix of the *Zelda* games—*Dragon Warrior* is almost pure strategy. The plot will be familiar to *Dungeons & Dragons* fans: Your mission is to save the mythical land of Alefgard from the evil Dragonlord, and as you explore the kingdom, you gain power and experience for defeating increasingly ferocious monsters. As in *Zelda*, you can save your game, turn off the machine and resume at the same point later. *Dragon Warrior* is reminiscent of standard computer role-playing games, but it's a solid introduction to the genre and very entertaining.

If you can't get your hands on *Dragon Warrior*, FCI's *Ultima* is a worthy substitute. This role-playing epic is another exercise in dungeon-bashing, leading to a climactic confrontation with the evil Exodus. However, *Ultima* is far more complicated than *Dragon Warrior*, with awesomely complex dungeons and fiendish traps. *Ultima* can be exasperating (FCI could have helped matters, for example, by including a map of the terrain), but the surprise finale makes it worth the effort.

The other "must" this Christmas is *Tetris*, the first videogame from the Soviet Union, although at presstime it was still unclear which version of this game will be available. Tengen's version came out in June, but Nintendo obtained a restraining order that forced it off the market. Whichever *Tetris*—Tengen's or Nintendo's—materializes on store shelves, get it. The premise is simple: As geometric shapes drift down the screen, you must manipulate them to form solid lines. It sounds easy, but this is an unusually addictive game that appeals to players of all ages.

Also prominent in the sparsely populated realm of games for grown-ups is Acclaim's *Othello*. This adaptation of the popular board game provides tough competition when you can't find a human opponent. The program offers four skill levels and three time limits, and you can also play against another person. A recall-move option is a big help for novices, but even expert *Othello* players will find a challenge here.

Holiday Hits: Among the current crop of recommended game cartridges are *Tetris* (above) for the NES, *R-Type* (right) for NEC's new TurboGrafx-16 system and *Tommy Lasorda Baseball* (below) for the Sega Genesis.

GAMES

More and more videogames are being adapted from popular movies: 1989 brought Nintendo versions of *Ghostbusters II*, *Willow*, *RoboCop*, *Back to the Future*, *Batman* and *The Terminator*. But the best game to come from a film was LJN's *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*. As Eddie Valient, you cruise around Los Angeles in search of clues to save Roger and stop Judge Doom from destroying Toontown. The toon characters are unusually expressive for a Nintendo game, and *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* remains lovingly faithful to its source without sacrificing its entertainment value as a game.

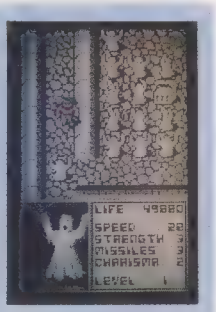
Plenty of arcade titles found their way to Nintendo this year, and the following are highly recommended: Tengen's *Gauntlet* and *Rolling Thunder*, Taito's *Operation Wolf*, Data East's *Rampage* and Mindscape's *Paperboy*, *720°* and *Roadblasters*. All these games were huge hits in the arcades, so you can still visit your local mall to check them out before you buy.

The most charming new game for the Nintendo has to be Absolute's *A Boy and His Blob*, designed by videogame legend David Crane. An alien from the planet Blobolonia has come to earth to find a boy who can help him defeat an evil emperor. By feeding the blob different flavors of jellybeans, you can turn it into various objects: Licorice turns the blob into a ladder, punch into a hole, vanilla into an umbrella, and so on. *A Boy and His Blob* is a delightfully silly game that thankfully avoids the macho violence endemic to the field.

Another "cute" cartridge is Taito's *Bubble Bobble*, the first videogame featuring bubble-blowing dinosaurs. The adorable Bub and Bob are trying to save their babies from the nefarious Baron von Blubba and must defeat his henchmen by trapping them in bubbles and popping them. The 226 screens offer endless challenges and are best negotiated in tandem with another player. *Bubble Bobble* is extremely silly but very absorbing.

With sports games for the NES coming fast and furious, a number of manufacturers are competing for a share of the market. Easily the best baseball game in the field is Tengen's *RBI Baseball*, an uncanny simulation that overcomes cartoony graphics to provide a realistic imitation of the summer classic. This is the only Nintendo baseball game in which you can use real players—Roger Clemens has a deadly heater, Vince Coleman runs the bases like a rabbit and you are well-advised to pitch around Jack Clark. Other high-quality sports simulations include Milton Bradley's *Jordan vs. Bird One on One* and Jaleco's *Hoops* (both basketball), Tengen's *Super Sprint* (auto racing) and, from Tradewest, *John Elway's Quarterback* (football).

Hand To Hand Combat



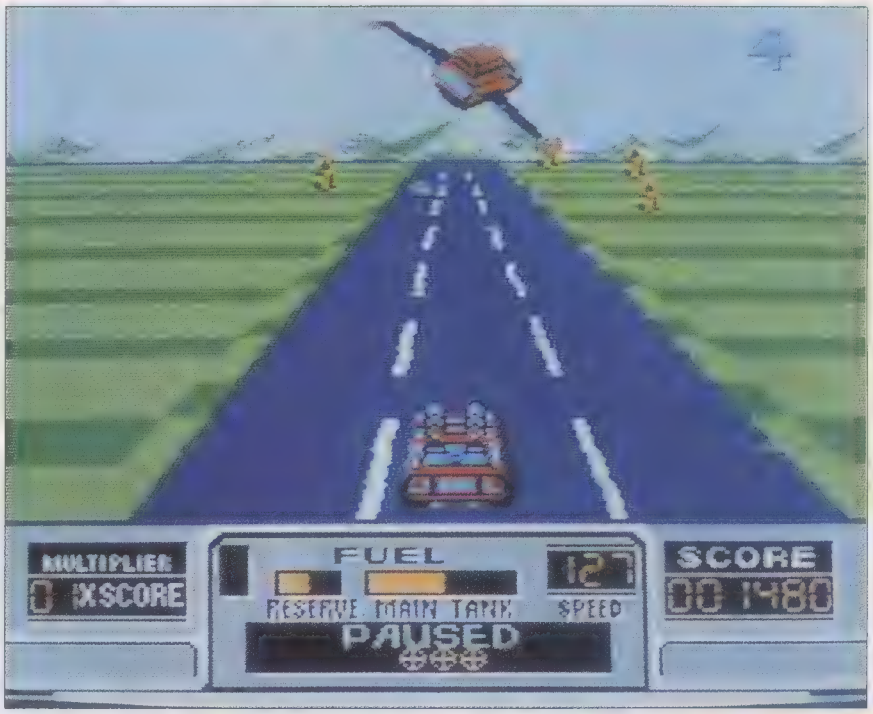
Hot on the heels of the NES' success, Nintendo is trying to introduce its fans to high-quality portable entertainment with the hand-held Game Boy, for $90. The Game Boy software we've seen so far offers all the sophistication of Nintendo's home titles, albeit in black & white. For example, the miniature *Tetris* is every bit as addictive as its home-screen parent, and its two-player mode gives this surefire classic an interesting competitive angle.

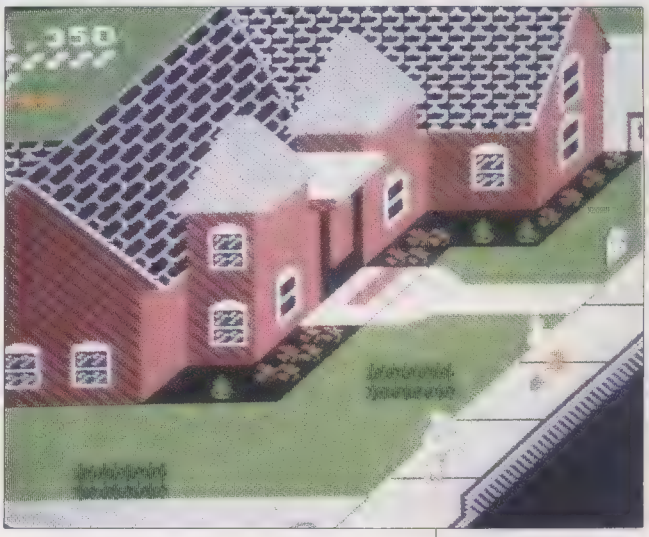
Super Mario Land offers yet another adventure with the beloved Mario brothers. This version bears many similarities to the original *Super Mario Bros.*—why tamper with a formula that's sold almost 10 million games?—but this *is* a new game, as complex and challenging as its predecessors.

Nintendo has lined up 20 of its affiliates to program cartridges for the Game Boy, but only a handful will be available this year. The best we've played so far is FCI's *Boxxle*, a welcome revival of a classic Japanese game. The task for each of its 110 screens seems simple—moving boxes from one part of a warehouse to another—but each room is fiendishly set up to require careful deduction and planning. If you somehow make it through all the puzzles, a construction mode lets you create your own.

Atari's Lynx, a portable color system for $150, is a more impressive piece of hardware than the Game Boy, but so far only six cartridges are planned for it, all from Epyx. The cartridge that comes with the hardware, *California Games*, features all the contests from the computer original, including surfing, sailboarding and skateboarding. All include full-color LCD graphics. **—LK**

Games to Go: *Time Quests & Treasure Chests* (above) is one of six cartridges for Atari's portable Lynx game system (right).





Street Scenes: Mindscape's *Road Blasters* (top), *Paperboy* (left) and *720°* (above) bring arcade-style action home.

SEGA SURVIVES

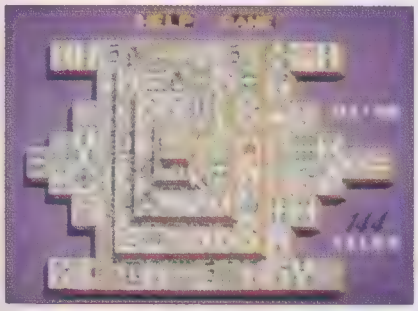
While Nintendo and its affiliates introduced over 100 titles this year, Sega debuted fewer than 30. But Sega devotees shouldn't despair over the state of this system, for the consistent quality of Sega's games more than makes up for the lack of quantity.

The real gem in Sega's lineup is *Phantasy Star*, still the best videogame for *any* system. This role-playing adventure leads off with a refreshing innovation: The lead character is a female, Alis, out to avenge her brother's death at the hands of the evil dictator Lassic. Unlike many other role-playing games, *Phantasy Star* maintains a sense of humor. Its wacky mix of science fiction and sword-and-sorcery makes the exhausting treks through intricate mazes worth the effort.

Miracle Warriors: Seal of the Dark Lord bears some resemblance to *Phantasy Star*. You must round up three other warriors and build up enough weapons and strength to defeat an evil sorcerer. It isn't as imaginative as *Phantasy Star*, but it's still absorbing. You'll find yourself spending hours at a time unearthing the secrets of its devious dungeons. Other role-playing games due before Christmas include a translation of Origin Systems' *Ultima IV* and *King's Quest* from Parker Brothers.

Sega also boasts a nifty "grown-up" game called *Shanghai*, based on software developed for the Macintosh. The object is to remove pairs of matched mahjongg tiles from a pyramidal formation called the Dragon. Since there are four of each tile, deciding which pairs to remove requires lots of planning, making *Shanghai* a truly sublime strategy game.

Sega's forte is translating its own arcade titles, games like *Out Run* and *Space Harrier*. This year's batch includes *Golden Axe, Dead Angle, Altered Beast, R-Type, Vigilante, Time Soldiers* and *Shinobi*. Again, you need only visit your local arcade for previews.



Mindbender: Sega's *Shanghai* is based on software originally designed for the Macintosh computer.

Sega's action lineup also includes an assortment of titles that won't be found in the arcades. The company tends to reserve more whimsical titles for its home machine, and these games are no exception. For example, in *Alex Kidd: High Tech World*, Alex must find the pieces of a map that will let him get to the video arcade! In *Basketball Nightmare*, you control a team of humans in a game of hoops. Your competition is a gang of ghosts, werewolves and vampires. *Cloud Master* takes you on a journey through a series of exotic Japanese landscapes in which you learn the magical powers that enable you to become Chuka Taisen, master of the clouds.

The best of this lot is *Wonder Boy III: The Dragon's Trap*. Sega has enlivened this series with a goofy twist: The curse of the Meka Dragon has changed Wonder Boy into a lizard, but given him the ability to transform himself into a mouse, a piranha, a lion or a hawk. All five animals have skills that are necessary to accomplish the mission, which is to find the Salamander Cross that will turn Wonder Boy back into a human. The variety of situations and villains raises *Wonder Boy III* far above the standard video adventure game, and a password feature (thankfully) lets you quit the game and resume it later at the same point. ■

BY MURRAY SLOVICK

DECK THE HALLS WITH HOLIDAY HARDWARE

A prime-time guide to VCRs & disc players even Scrooge couldn't resist.

There's no better time for decking the halls with decks than Christmas. Stores are stocked with more varieties of VCR and videodisc player than at any other time of the year. And the spread of VCRs to nearly 70 percent of America's households has put a premium on competitive prices and bountiful feature packages.

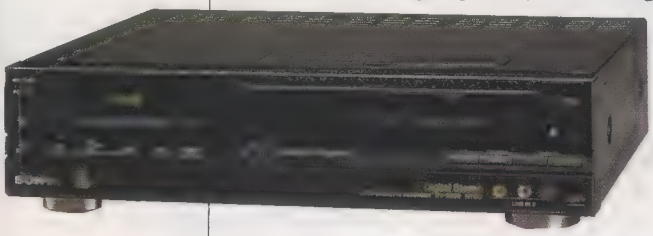
Confronted with such choice, a holiday shopper can be forgiven for feeling like a child who has lost his or her parent's shopping list. Which decks are most exciting? Most dependable? Which offer top values? The equipment described below does all three and comes in three shapes: VCRs, TV sets with built-in VCRs and videodisc players. They span the spectrum from slightly luxurious to merely essential and will serve well either as gifts or as starting points for a full-scale shopping expedition.

Triple Play: Sharp's MV-D100 combi player also serves as a three-disc CD changer.

Pair of Aces: RCA's VR 450 VHS VCR (above) features an express record function, while Sony's EV-S350 8mm deck (below) records in PCM digital audio.

For the serious video buff in your life, consider Panasonic's PV-S4980. It's one of only a few VCRs that deliver Super VHS picture quality for less than $1,000; in this case, the suggested price is $849. The S-VHS circuits yield more than 400 lines of horizontal resolution, but the deck also comes with hi-fi stereo sound, synchronized editing, a flying erase head, a multicomponent remote control that can learn commands from other remotes and bar code programming. The latter feature relies on a pen-shaped scanner to read timer instructions directly from a sheet of bar codes included with the VCR.

Eight-millimeter fans can enjoy the burgeoning number of movies on small cassettes with Sony's EV-S350, for $800. Along with a full complement of viewing features, this tabletop 8mm deck has digital stereo audio with PCM dubbing and a microphone mixing capability for adding to the soundtrack of home productions.



Consumers who have yet to experience the joy of hi-fi stereo on videotape should be bowled over by Quasar's VH5595 VCR, for $580. Other features on this four-head VHS deck include a flying erase head, 21x search speed, double speed playback and onscreen programming (with an optional bar code scanner).

On the image side, JVC has installed the DA-4 head system in its HR-D620U VCR to ensure noiseless still frames and slow motion playback. The system uses unique oval video heads with wire coils to eliminate false signal responses for as good a VHS picture as we've seen outside of S-VHS decks. This $529 machine also includes a "dual screen programming" system that lets a user carry out programming instructions using either onscreen menus or a liquid crystal display on the remote control. In addition, a new A/B switching button simplifies editing by enabling the remote to control two JVC VCRs.

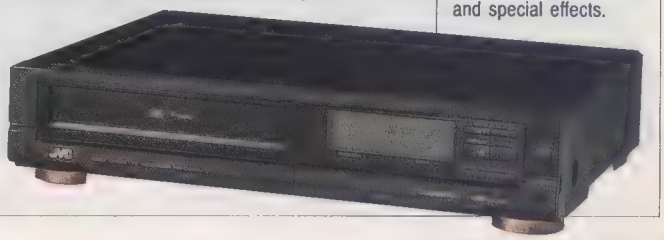
Consumers will enjoy the ease with which they can find specific scenes on Mitsubishi's HS-U30R VCR, thanks to a 19-position index search that runs at speeds 75 or 140 times normal. A 99-position, high-speed address search adds to the options. This $499 four-head deck also offers video mute, video noise reduction, onscreen programming and a tape transport with an unusually quick response time. Twin digital auto tracking reduces problems from tapes made on other VCRs. Two antenna inputs provide lots of options for the eight-event/four-week timer.

BOTTOM LINE BEST BETS

A number of more economical VCRs also make great gifts. Among the new smaller VHS decks, RCA's handsome VR 450 is less than 15 inches wide. Reasonably priced at $399, its four double azimuth heads provide clean still frames and special effects. An express record function allows up to four hours of instant recording.

Hitachi's two-head VT-M121A VCR, for $320, also comes in a compact chassis, and its Video Brain remote control comes programmed with the operating codes for most recent brands of TV sets. Such features as auto power on, auto play, auto tape cancel, auto eject and auto power off/eject keep button pressing to a minimum.

GoldStar's GHV-5300M, for $430,



Mr. Clean: JVC's HR-D620U VHS VCR has a unique video head system for distortion-free playback and special effects.

DECK THE HALLS

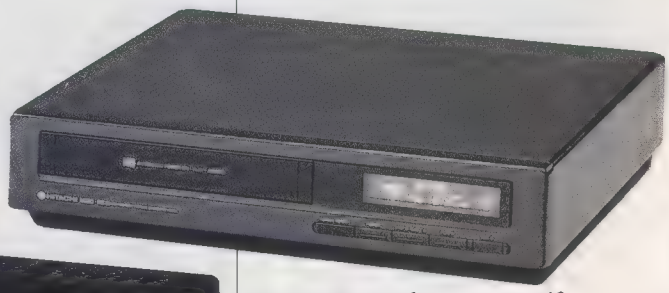
offers linear stereo, onscreen programming, an MTS stereo TV decoder, Dolby noise reduction and an eight-event/one-year timer. Among the least costly models, GE's VG-7500 VHS VCR offers good basic performance for only $299. This monaural unit makes an excellent second deck and includes several automatic features and a four-event/two-week timer.

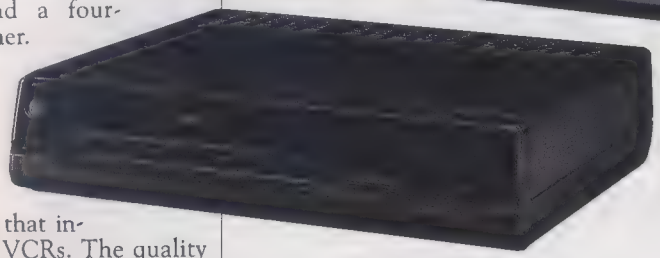
For shoppers whose lists include people who love to play tapes but who hate the bother of cables, consider televisions that include full-featured VCRs. The quality of these combination TV/VCRs has improved significantly in the past year. Panasonic's PV-M2028, for $750, is an excellent example. It combines a 20-inch color TV with a VHS VCR that uses step-by-step onscreen prompts to walk users through its one-month/four-event timer. Auto rewind, auto repeat, auto power off and a 21x visual search speed make this especially easy to use.

We also think highly of Symphonic's 13-TVCR Mk II, for $599. Produced by the U.S. marketing arm of Japan's Funai Electric, the 13-inch color TV set includes a unified remote control and a VHS VCR with one-week/two-event timer and 111-channel, cable-compatible reception.

DISC ALTERNATIVES

Videodisc players are hopping this year and you'll be hard pressed to find a model that doesn't outperform most VCRs in terms of video and audio reproduction. In terms of options, Sharp's MV-D100 combination player is a technological marvel even at $1,499. It not only handles all LaserVision and CD Video discs with ease, but serves as well as a full-function three-disc CD changer with 20-step random programming.





Stacked Decks: Hitachi's VT-M121A (right) and General Electric's VG-7500 (below) VHS VCRs offer substantial features at down-to-earth prices.

Its video features include an S-VHS output and an automatic level searching mechanism, which enhances edits by searching discs at high speed to determine the optimal recording level for a VCR or an audio cassette deck. Features to facilitate CD-to-cassette edits include auto fade and an ability to automatically arrange songs onto both sides of a cassette based on the length of the tape. This minimizes blank areas at the ends of tapes.

We'd also welcome under our tree Philips' CDV488 combi player, for $1,300, which has digital video memory for perfect still frames and a variable speed strobe on CLV-format videodiscs. A jog/shuttle dial, unusual on a disc player, lets you view a disc in either direction at speeds ranging to 10x.

Yamaha's combi player, the CDV-1100 for $799, includes a digital noise reduction system with an analog-to-digital converter that improves the sound from older videodiscs that only have analog audio tracks. The circuitry removes the annoying pops prevalent on many older discs. The player also offers 8x oversampling and an 18-bit digital filter with twin 16-bit digital-to-analog converters for audio performance that competes with the best CD players.

Finally, don't overlook the main reason Pioneer will probably sell 100,000 videodisc players this year: the CLD-1070, a superb entry-level combi player priced at an affordable $600. Its audio attributes include a 4x oversampling filter and twin D/A converters that reduce cross-channel interference to ensure accurate phasing between left and right stereo channels. Videodisc newcomers should appreciate such features as 20-chapter programming, direct access and track search visual scan and random-track CD play. We also like the automatic program edit, which takes the guess work out of dubbing from CD to audio tape. ■

Murray Slovick is Editor of Dealerscope Merchandising.

Features Attraction: Pioneer's CLD-1070 combi disc player boasts 20-chapter programming, track search, direct access and visual scan functions.

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BY DAVID LACHENBRUCH
AND ART LEVIS

BERLIN DIARY

Special report on the hottest products at video's show of shows.

Screen Gems: Telefunken's monitor-dominated exhibit booth (top) and a prototype 5-inch color LCD TV by Thomson (above).

For many European videophiles, it's as close to paradise as they'll ever get. It offers the drama of a major theatrical event, the frenetic pace of a non-stop rock concert and the excitement of a world class technological exposition—all in one place at one time. It's called International Funkaustellung, and it is truly the electronic show of shows.

Funkaustellung translates loosely as "audio-video fair," and every two years it transforms West Berlin from an isolated outpost of democracy into a sparkling showcase for the latest in high-end European electronic equipment. And it does so on a vast scale. Funkaustellung occupies nearly a million square feet of fairground space around Berlin's TV tower. Despite its remote venue, the fair draws almost 500,000 people from West Berlin, West Germany and the rest of Europe.

About 50,000 are retailers and other trade visitors examining new video and audio lines. But the remaining 400,000-plus are interested citizens, many of whom travel hundreds of miles—leapfrogging communist East Germany to the capitalist island of West Berlin to see the latest in technology and, perhaps, also to end up with autographs of their favorite rock stars, comedians and movie idols.

Those who don't make the fair can share in the excitement. During the show's ten-day run, all of Germany's TV networks, cable channels and direct satellite broadcasters originate most of their programs live from studios at the fairgrounds. But the equipment—heavily skewed toward video—displayed in 25 cavernous pavillions usually steals the show, and the 1989 event was no exception. To make certain visitor attention is drawn to pavillion displays, exhibitors spare little in assembling elaborate, imaginative presentations. This year, for instance, German TV manufacturer Saba installed a

New & Improved: Funkaustellung innovations include fashion panels for TV sets, a 1,250-line TV with a 16:9 aspect ratio from Thomson and a Philips VCR with an LCD monitor.

three-story papier-mache mountain in its booth, then staged continuous exhibitions of rock climbers scrambling up and rapelling down the *faux* mountain's craggy face.

Among the hotter video topics were the first announcements of plans to sell a new breed of wide-screen TV set—with picture proportions close to those of a Cinemascope movie. First to spell out specific European plans was France's giant Thomson group, which makes TV sets under the Telefunken, Nordmende and Saba names in Germany, Ferguson in England, Thomson in France and RCA and GE in the U.S. Thomson says it will hit the European market with a wide-screen set sporting a 16:9 aspect ratio in the fall of 1990 at a price around $5,000.

The Thomson wide-screen sets will use a 34-inch tube that will display standard broadcast pictures in wide-screen (by slicing off a small portion of the picture at both bottom and top). Some pictures will be transmitted in a true wide-screen format and displayed in proper proportions using the MAC broadcasting system (more about which later).

In addition, the set will show movies from tapes and videodiscs that have been recorded with letterboxing (a wide-screen format with black space at top and bottom), but will display them full-screen without the horizontal black bands. Letterboxing, which displays a movie with its original proportions, but which doesn't fill a standard TV screen, is becoming increasingly popular in Europe. Although Thomson apparently will be first with wide-screen sets, Philips and other major European manufacturers indicated at the fair that they won't be far behind.

WIDE HORIZONS

In past years, most video introductions by European manufacturers at Funkaustellung had little meaning for U.S. enthusiasts. Now that's changed, due not only to Thomson's acquisition of the RCA and GE names, but also to the more aggressive U.S. posture being adopted by Philips with its Philips, Magnavox and Sylvania lines. Indeed, both Philips and Thomson indicated at Funkaustellung that wide-screen sets will come to the U.S., but only after they have had time to ascertain the demand here. Because no wide-screen broadcasts are currently scheduled and American video recordings and broadcasts are not commonly letterboxed, wide-screen may take some time to arrive on these shores.

Eventually, wide-screen sets will be used to display high-definition TV transmissions, and HDTV was much in evidence at the fair. Funkaustellung

Window Dressing: A remote control by Finland's Nokia brand lets users activate different features simply by shifting the position of the remote.

TELEFUNKEN, NOKIA PHOTOS: ART LEVIS

BERLIN

1989, in fact, was the scene of the most intensive schedule of HDTV broadcasting ever attempted anywhere—including Japan.

For the ten days of the show, a studio at the fair originated broadcasts in the preliminary version of a 1,250-line format known as HD-MAC. Cable and fiber-optic links carried them to every exhibit. Broadcasts in the final HD-MAC format are scheduled to start in Europe in time for the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona, but the Berlin fair provided a breathtaking preview of the movie-sharp wide-screen images HDTV can provide.

While the HDTV exhibits drew crowds, a development far closer to European hearts created a more immediately relevant attraction. While the average European viewer has had access to only three TV channels in the past, satellites and cable suddenly are providing an explosion of choice. A joint Western European project called Eureka has resulted in a new satellite-to-home transmission program, using the MAC (multiplexed analog components) broadcast system.

MAC sharply improves a received picture by separating the signals for color and brightness in the transmission, making it a sort of way-station on the road to HD-MAC. It's similar in this respect to Super VHS or Hi8 recording formats. MAC transmissions in most European countries provide for as many as eight digital sound channels, conquering for the first time the language barrier on the European continent.

MAC transmissions are incompatible with current land-based transmissions in Europe, but digital converters will be used to let a single receiver serve for both. JVC, in fact, displayed an S-VHS recorder with a built-in adapter that not only makes it possible to record MAC signals in full fidelity, but enables a standard broadcast receiver to pick up MAC pictures. S-VHS, in fact, is ideally suited for recording MAC pictures, since it has about the same resolution and also uses a system to separate color and brightness signals.

Word Power: A new teletext page-turning system allows quicker access to news and information.

Wide Receiver: Saba's wide-screen tube TV will one day accept HDTV transmissions.

ONLY IF IT HERTZ

This year's Funkaustellung also witnessed what is apparently the answer to a long-standing European TV problem—PAL and SECAM flicker. Both TV broadcast systems have 625 horizontal lines, resulting in a higher-definition picture than the 525-line NTSC system Americans use. The dark side is that, while the American picture is composed of 60 frames per second, European pictures change at a rate of 50 Hertz, or 50 times per second—just below the noticeable flicker threshold. The answer? "Hundred Hertz," a phrase popular with just about every showgoer by the time Funkaustellung wound down.

Every major TV maker displayed digital "flicker-free" sets, in which memory storage systems double the number of frames per second, completely eliminating one of European TV's fatal weaknesses.

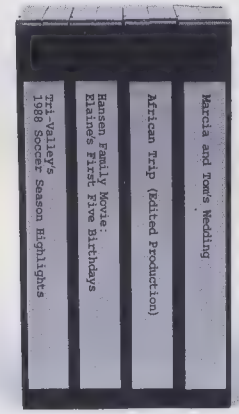
If European TV has lagged behind the U.S. in some respects, it is light years ahead in other areas. For more than a decade, for example, viewers all over Europe have been enjoying a digital TV feature spurned by Americans. The feature is teletext, providing instant newspapers and magazines on the TV screen, broadcast in the space between TV picture signals. Teletext exhibits this year boasted several improvements, including a new page-turning system that more quickly accesses desired material without returning to a master menu.

The answer to a problem plaguing video users all over the world—ultra-complex remote controls—may have surfaced at Funkaustellung. Finland-

continued on page 143

Z-Vision: Thomson's rear projection HDTV prototype.

Your memories are worth keeping.



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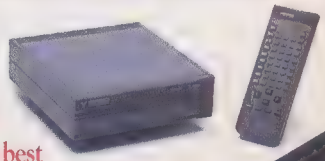

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BY LAWRENCE B. JOHNSON

ALL-PRO RECEIVERS

A/V components tackle the challenge of video processing.

As home entertainment systems grow more complex, it sometimes becomes possible to simplify an audio/video setup in a single stroke, to eliminate components, extra remotes and strands from the rat's nest of cables behind most equipment racks—without compromising quality. Enter the contemporary audio/video receiver. Its original hi-fi incarnation merged control and power amplifiers with an AM/FM stereo tuner, a combination that swiftly won it a lasting place in the hearts of music lovers.

But now that audio and video technologies are meeting on a common plane of high performance, some remarkable designs are transforming the audio receiver into a true video component. The addition by a handful of companies of circuits and features designed with video watchers in mind is creating a generation of receivers that not only serve as A/V control centers, but that help other components deliver peak performance.

The new receivers possess what, at first glance, may seem like a bewildering array of choices. But coping with A/V switching, multiamp surround sound, digital signal processing, multicomponent remote control and AM/FM reception in a single box doesn't have to be a daunting experience. Receivers by a variety of companies—including Sony, Pioneer, Onkyo, Mitsubishi, Kenwood, Luxman, Philips and Vector Research—offer plenty of reasons that justify their purchase.

We'll try to spell those features out below to help you separate the important ones from the merely cosmetic. But, keep in mind that such features aren't free. While it's possible to find legitimate bargain-priced receivers for less than $400 (we'll be covering some), beware of low-cost units that have "VCR" or "video" stamped on the front panel even though they only handle the audio portion of a signal.

If your eye is on value, beware also of mere cleverness. Many of the receivers discussed below come with motorized volume controls that respond to remote instructions. That is, the volume dial actually turns as the volume changes. Companies say such mechanical devices work more precisely while avoiding the distortion attributed to electronic volume devices. They're also pleasing to watch—but should they justify buying a particular receiver? Probably not.

Top A/V receivers, even those with motorized volume dials, leave cleverness behind. Those at the top, in the $1,000 and up class, emphasize engineering genius. In Sony's STR-D2010, the worlds of audio and video converge at the cutting edge of digital technology. The D2010 is an exceptionally powerful receiver, rated at 130 watts per channel in frontal stereo, while a separate amp delivers 15 watts per channel to the rear for surround sound. Moreover, its extensive A/V connections are augmented by one of the first applications in a receiver of digital signal processing.

There seems to be little under the digital sun that such signal processing doesn't cover. Now all its powers are within the single chassis of the STR-D2010. The receiver can digitally decode all types of digital sources, using selectable sampling frequencies for CDs (44.1 kilohertz) and digital audio tape dubbing (48 kHz). There's even a setting for future digital FM broadcasts.

That's just a start. Digital signal processing also provides optimum tone control in the form of digital equalization, dynamic suppression to confine the extremes of loud and soft passages into a range suitable for background listening, digital delay to create four different acoustical environments and Dolby digital surround sound.

As for video switching, the STR-D2010 provides three sets of inputs for linking VCRs and videodisc players, including an S-video (or Y/C) terminal for any video source equipped with such an

output. The circuit separates the luminance and chrominance components of a picture signal. Sony's star receiver sells for $1,100.

Similarly tricked out for video switching, and even a touch more potent in terms of surround amplifier power, is Yamaha's RX-1130, for $1,199. Yamaha's flagship receiver augments its 125-watts/channel frontal output with 30 watts/channel for the rear. All this wattage serves five modes of surround sound from theater-quality Dolby to simulated stereo. What Yamaha terms "live" surround boasts automatic time delays ranging from 10 to 30 milliseconds. In other surround modes, users can adjust the delay.

The receiver's full slate of eight audio inputs is complemented by three video inputs, among them an S-video jack. Although the RX-1130 doesn't have digital signal processing, it provides rear-panel connecting terminals for outboard digital signal processors. For audio purists, Yamaha has included a CD-direct switch that routes the signal from a compact disc directly from the inputs to the amplifier output, bypassing all tone controls and signal processing circuits.

Pioneer must have been thinking of the video hobbyist when it designed its new VSX-9500S receiver, for $1,050. A veritable switching console, it offers six video inputs: VCR 1, 2, 3, videodisc player, TV monitor, user's choice. Three S-video inputs and one output jack can accommodate two VCRs, a videodisc player and a monitor. The signal from a monitor/receiver can be fed directly to the VSX-9500S, which permits two-way dubbing. What's more, you can watch one program while taping another, thanks to separate record and monitor busses. Remember when this used to be a big deal in audio switching?

But our picture isn't complete yet. Pioneer's video circuitry includes a split-screen enhancer that lets users sharpen picture edges. The split-screen mode even permits direct comparisons between a processed and an unprocessed picture on the same screen. The system's power is 125 watts/channel for the front and 30 watts/channel for the rear. Dolby Pro-Logic Surround, the type typically used in feature films, highlights the ambient sound options.

Dub Master: Kenwood's KR-V9010 has S-video jacks and a feature that lets users add audio to a video track.

Split Second: Pioneer's VSX-9500S lets users enhance image sharpness by watching a split-screen.

TUNED FOR TV

Onkyo touts basic Dolby Surround—as distinguished from Pro-Logic—and two synthesized ambient modes in its TX-SV7M receiver, for $1,050. But there's a further lure: stereo TV sound. In addition to the usual AM and FM stereo tuner sections, this receiver incorporates a TV tuner for the VHF band (channels 2 to 13) that delivers multichannel television sound, better known as MTS. Thus you don't need a stereo-equipped TV—or VCR—to enjoy stereo TV broadcasts. Cable subscribers can simply link the cable switchbox to the antenna input on the TX-SV7M and, *voila*, stereo TV!

In standard two-channel stereo, Onkyo's receiver is rated at 100 watts/channel. Operated in any surround fashion, it delivers 90 watts a side to the front speakers and 20 watts each to the rear pair. Adjustable time delays permit users

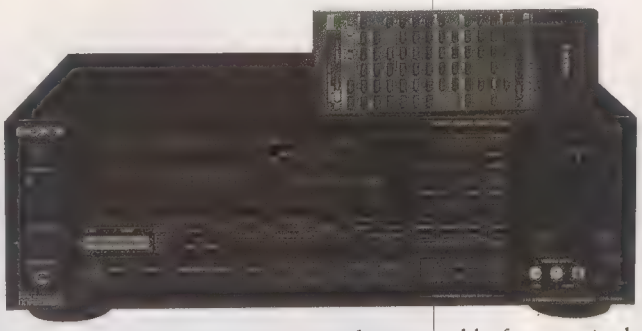
The Equalizer: JVC's RX-701V receiver has a graphic equalizer that can store ten settings.

to tailor listening rooms to any of three acoustical "sizes." The TX-SV7M has two video inputs, switchable for laserdiscs or tapes.

Mitsubishi offers options aplenty in the video connections on its M-AV1, for $1,100. Of four video inputs, two are switchable for Super VHS. The TV output can be run through standard video cable or S-video cable. In addition, the M-AV1 provides a videotape output as well as two audio tape loops. Most receivers afford the convenience of rear-panel AC outlets, an enormous help in minimizing the tangle of cables. But the M-AV1 is exceptionally generous on this point. It has a remarkable total of five AC outlets, two switched and three unswitched.

It's also another powerful receiver, rated at 125 watts/channel in stereo with 25 watts/channel for the rear in Dolby or matrix surround modes. In a high-tech twist, the receiver's audio menu and status display can be projected onto a video monitor. Separate record-selector switches for both audio and video enable users to view or listen to one program while taping another.

These heavy-hitters reflect state-of-the-art design in today's A/V receivers, but there are some very attractive alternatives that will leave you some change from a G-note. Kenwood's KR-V9010, at $850, boasts Dolby Pro-Logic Surround Sound powered by 130 watts a side in the front and 20 watts each way in the rear. Supplementary "theater" and "hall" surround modes can be customized thanks to an adjustable digital delay. Four video inputs include S-video provisions and dubbing with Audio Injection, Kenwood's name for adding new sound to a video track.



By the Numbers: Sony's STR-D2010 features digital signal processing and three sets of video inputs.

Closer to a conventional receiver, although equipped with video capabilities, is Luxman's R-115, for $850. While lacking surround sound it offers frontal amplifier power rated at 70 watts a channel. "Video" and "video disc" connections permit linking A/V sources with a TV or second VCR. Other notable features include direct-path signal routing from a CD player, preamp output terminals for patching in an outboard power amp and inputs for an auxiliary signal processor.

An array of four video inputs and three outputs makes for extensive system switching in Philips' FR880 receiver, for $649. Besides Dolby Surround decoding, the FR880 also has a matrix surround mode for non-Dolby sources and a "spatial" mode for adding ambience to monaural sources. Its two amplifiers deliver a medium-power combination of 75 watts/channel to the front and 15 watts a side to the rear.

JVC's RX-701V receiver, which incorporates Dolby Surround with an adjustable digital time delay, provides four-channel power of 70 watts a side for the front and 12 watts a side for the rear. Switched into standard stereo, the power jumps to 80 watts a

continued on page 144

Switch Hitter: Yamaha's RX-1130 receiver has eight audio and three video inputs, including one for Super VHS, and a bypass for better CD signal processing.

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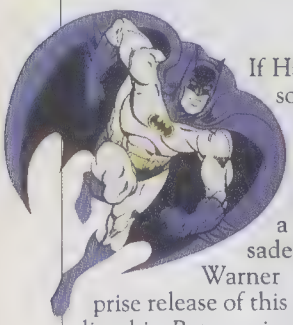
BY BRUCE EDER

BETTING ON BATMAN

Holy tape transfer! Is the dark knight's transfer onto video his greatest gamble?

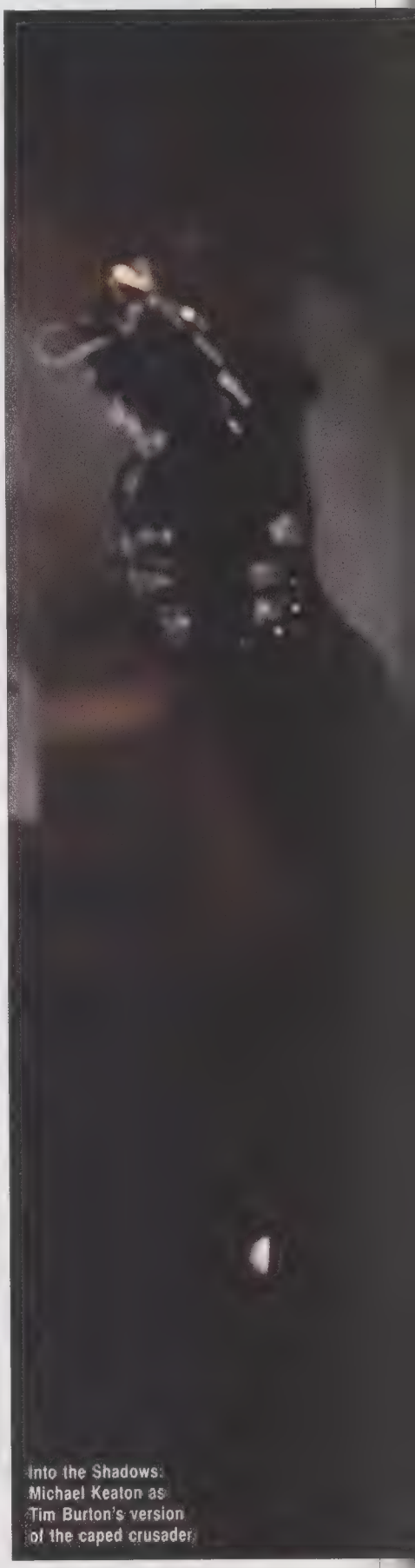


If Halloween is the season of the witch, this Christmas is due to be the season of the bat—at least if the media hype over a certain caped crusader is any indication. Warner Home Video's surprise release of this summer's $250-million hit, *Batman*, is expected to propel 5 million copies of the movie into homes in the coming few months. Indeed, the film's fast sprint to tape and disc is drawing a great deal of attention inside the video industry as well as outside. The effort required to produce enough copies and its likely impact on what's called "sell-through" (the pricing of movies on tape so that people will want to buy, not just rent, them) make *Batman*'s release the tape event of the year as well as an unprecedented marketing gamble for movie studios.

But amid the excitement over the rushed release and its $24.98 price, few seem to have noticed that *Batman* is the kind of movie that almost always disappoints video viewers, and not just because TV screens are smaller than theater screens. The film presents unusually difficult transfer problems. Discussions with industry experts, most of whom requested anonymity, raise questions as to how successfully these problems can be solved. (Warner declined to make preview copies of the tape available and stores had not yet received copies at presstime.)

Almost every movie transfer suffers some from the relatively diminutive size of TV screens, but most viewers have accustomed themselves to the change. *Batman*'s special problem is its darkness. In fact, it's not just dark, it's murky. Almost the entire film, which runs longer than two hours, takes place in low-lit nightscapes or in muted indoor settings in which the characters nearly always dress in dark attire.

The movie's major colors are dark and medium greens, blue, black and gray. All lack contrast and the photography emphasizes shadows. Apart from a few love scenes set in direct sunlight and Jack Nicholson's Joker—who wears the film's only bright colors—*Batman* may be the darkest-looking thriller since



Into the Shadows: Michael Keaton as Tim Burton's version of the caped crusader

PHOTOS: DC COMICS; CARTOON: WARNER BROS., INC.

Joker on the Loose: Jack Nicholson's Joker enjoys the fruits of an evil scheme (top) before threatening to pitch Kim Bassinger's Vicki Vale (center) over a parapet; above, the armored Batmobile safely navigates an explosive retreat.

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BATMAN

Alien and *The Terminator*. And anyone who has rented or bought either of these knows how muddy they look on video.

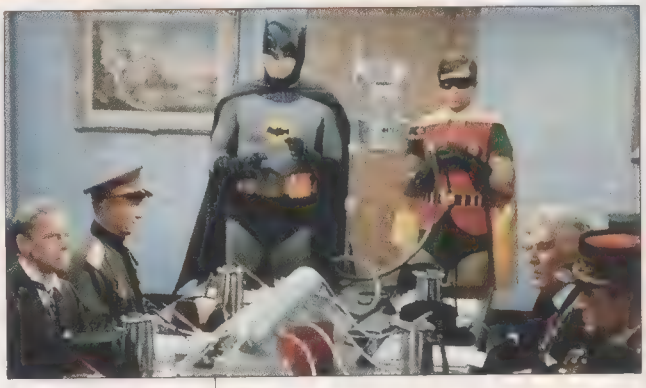
This year's other hot Christmas videos—*Bambi*, *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*, *The Land Before Time* and the 50th anniversary edition of *The Wizard of Oz*—are all better suited to the small screen. They focus on characters as much as special effects (even *Roger Rabbit*) and have bright, high-contrast color schemes that work well on TV sets.

The essential problem with transferring a picture like *Batman* to video lies in the differing natures of film and tape. "When you're dealing with a film this dark, the signal-to-noise ratio is very bad," explained a top tape-transfer specialist from the West Coast. "The effect is a smearing of detail, especially because of the lack of well-defined color as well as brightness. The luminance and chrominance are both very low throughout the picture."

Both transfers for the video release—to tape and to videodisc—were made under the supervision of *Batman* director Tim Burton, according to Warner Bros. The cassette transfer was panned and scanned, while the disc version was letterboxed to preserve the wide-screen image seen in theaters. But one veteran transfer artist, who has worked on films ranging from Shakespearean epics to low-budget horror flicks, believes movies as dark as *Batman* have problems that inherently limit the quality of their image on video.

"They'll use either a low-contrast print or a negative, so the source will be better than what was seen in theaters," he explained. "But going from film, which is a high-resolution medium, to a 525-line TV system limits what can be retained in the way of contrast and detail." Trying to capture a film like *Batman* on the VHS format, which is limited to about 250 lines of horizontal resolution, is akin to squeezing two pounds of baloney into a one-pound bag.

Warner Bros.' biggest squeeze, however, may result from having to fill the expected demand for copies by the tape's November 15 street date. The studio has effectively tied up the entire tape duplication industry, says a representative of a rival studio, by running off 5 million copies of *Batman* in 10 weeks. By contrast, MGM/UA began duplicating 2.5 million copies of its anniversary edition of *The Wizard of Oz* last May. Disney's stockpile of *Bambi* has been building for months.



Once Upon a Bat: Batman, played by Adam West, and Robin (right) in *Batman: The Movie*, a 1966 film version of the TV series that featured (above, right to left) Burgess Meredith as the Penguin, Cesar Romero as the Joker, Frank Gorshin as the Riddler and Lee Meriwether as the Catwoman.

"There probably won't be many serious quality control problems," observed a rival program director. "But Warner has paralyzed the tape industry. This means that orders to restock titles between now and Christmas will be delayed." Others were less confident about the quality of *Batman* cassettes. "If they're doing 5 million in 10 weeks, then they're relying on at least some high-speed duplication, and a real crash program," commented one industry analyst.

HOLY COMPETITION!

Oddly enough, the one piece of *Batman* video memorabilia that has been on shelves for months has none of these potential problems. CBS/Fox's *Batman—The Movie* (1966), starring Adam West and Burt Ward, is the exact opposite of the Warner Bros. *Batman*. Shot in garish DeLuxe Color (like the Beatles movie *Help*), this enjoyably campy film inspired by the TV series translates exceptionally well to home video. The wide-screen effect is missing, but viewers accustomed to the TV show will hardly miss it, and the picture and sound have acquired a luster derived from the script's mid-'60s zaniness. The story is about a plot by the Penguin (Burgess Meredith), the Joker (Cesar Romero), the Riddler (Frank Gorshin) and the Catwoman (Lee Meriwether) to take over the world. It's a hoot.

But while everyone scrambles around looking for Michael Keaton's version of *Batman*, it's Fox's *Batman—The Movie* that will become a collectible within the month. CBS/Fox is due to

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PROGRAMMING

Film of the Month

Ghostbusters II

1989. Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd, Sigourney Weaver, Harold Ramis; wr. Aykroyd, Ramis; pr./dir. Ivan Reitman. 102m. (PG) ss cc $89.95. RCA/Columbia. V image: good.

When you want a slapdash sequel with half the fun of the original...When you want flat dialogue, amiably lazy acting and overkill special effects...Who ya gonna call? *Ghostbusters II*, of course. So casual it looks like a half-hearted rehearsal, the inevitable follow-up to 1984's mega-smash can't miss when Bill Murray's on screen. Whether making wisecracks, drooling baby talk or simply contorting his goofy mug, this consummate wise guy turns the flimsiest material into laid-back comedy.

And *Ghostbusters II* is nothing if not thin. Essentially a rehash of the first movie, it's set five years later, when the guys have split up and fallen on dull times. Peter Venkman (Murray) hosts a cheesy TV talk show on the paranormal. Ray Stantz (Aykroyd) and Winston Zeddemore (Ernie Hudson) perform at kids' birthday parties. Egon Spengler (Ramis) engages in obscure behavioral research. Enter Venkman's ex-girlfriend Dana Barrett (Weaver), now the single parent of an adorable bambino.

Dana's fears for her child inspire the gang to reunite for another bout with the powers of darkness, just in the nick of time: A nasty medieval spirit named Vigo needs a human host to return to earth, and has selected her little Oscar to be the vessel. In the course of battling this nether force, our heros fall in a river of pink slime, zap scary apparitions, get arrested and engage in a roaring climax involving the Statue of Liberty.

Screenwriters Ramis and Aykroyd have again given themselves suprisingly skimpy parts. Aykroyd epitomizes pudgy blandness, while the smirking Ramis seems to be enjoying some private joke. Token minority Ghostbuster Hudson just watches. Although underused, Rick Moranis brilliantly captures the essence of nerdiness as mousy Louis Tully—the poor slob's inept attempt to play defense attorney is priceless. ("Gimme a break. We're both lawyers," he whines to the prosecutor.)

Ghostbusters II holds one cool surprise: Peter MacNicol. Portraying art curator and minion of evil Janosz Poha, he spouts garbled lines in a mangled Eastern European accent reminiscent of SCTV's polka-happy Schmenge Brothers. Though MacNicol can't disguise the flabbiness of the proceedings, his screwball fervor offers a fresh variation on the movie's canned zaniness.

Momentary diversions include a bouncing toaster and a Times Square marquee bearing the name of Eugene Levy (Ramis' former SCTV mate). I can't deny the juvenile appeal of those flashy, familiar special effects, either, although the visuals seem scrunched on the small screen. Otherwise, *Ghostbusters II* makes perfect sense on the box—it's mild, predictable fluff, just like a sitcom. **—Jon Young**

Pardon My Ectoplasm: Slime fighters (left to right) Ernie Hudson, Dan Aykroyd, Bill Murray and Harold Ramis reunite in *Ghostbusters II* to save New York City.

BY IRA ROBBINS

Editor's Choice

Couple Trouble: Dexter Fletcher and Ione Skye mix it up in *The Rachel Papers* (left) while Lynn Redgrave helps Jesse Birdsall break out of his shell in *Getting It Right* (below).

I tell you, a girl could get a *complex*. Consider Ione Skye. One minute she's just an attractive teenager (albeit with a famous parent: '60s folk-rocker Donovan) who's lucky enough to have her acting ambitions answered thanks to a small part in *River's Edge*. Next thing you know, she's starring in two strikingly similar films—in the same year. Both *The Rachel Papers* and *Say Anything...* cast Skye, who is pretty but no Bo Derek, as a seemingly unattainable object of desire for intelligent, lovably offbeat heroes.

In each film a charming misfit with more brains than looks launches an unlikely, but relentless campaign to win Miss Perfect. Cameron Crowe's witty *Say Anything* pairs a fast-talking amateur kickboxer with an overachieving Seattle classmate whose academic goals shut her off from everyone but her protective father. *The Rachel Papers*, a faithless adaptation of Martin Amis' mordant novel of British adolescence, introduces Oxford-bound Charles Highway (Fletcher) to the titular Rachel Noyes (Skye), an American in London, whose flaky mom and snooty boyfriend (Spader) temporarily obstruct romance.

By dispensing with many of the book's details (the switch from journal-keeping to computer filing should have resulted in a title change to *The Rachel Discs*), writer/director Harris upholds the tradition of turning quality literature into cinematic tripe. The flat script, in which the protagonist wins his prize with wit and perseverance, undoes Amis' precocious sophisticates and diminishes the role British class culture plays in the film.

Instead of a neurotic schemer on a smooth "descent into manhood," a young adult admirable for his pluck, maturity and resourcefulness, Fletcher's Highway is a horny little nudge. Harris' feeble, indecisive direction stifles the drama and substitutes gratuitous nudity for emotional detail.

Spader, who looks like he's ready to star in *Donald Trump: The Movie*, is wasted in a small part. But Pryce is great as the uncouth brother-in-law from hell, a bland character brought to memorable life. Skye is just adequate in a part that sidesteps tough dramatic stretches like anger or sadness.

Say Anything also focuses on the dubious notion that any nerd can get the girl of his dreams by honing his conversational skills. On the verge of graduation, remarkably popular misfit Lloyd Dobler (Cusack) sets his mind on dating brilliant, beautiful Diane Court (Skye). Overlooking the fact that she doesn't know he's alive, Lloyd calls and, in an impressive display of telephone mania, successfully invites her to a party.

Despite Diane's singlemindedly devoted father (Mahoney) and a plane ticket to study in England, the date with Lloyd opens her eyes. Meeting classmates she never got to know broadens her perspective and opens her up to Lloyd's enthusiastic attentions. Diane's father objects to the inevitable romance, but is distracted when the IRS begins to investigate his nursing home.

Crowe's fine screenplay, which is about the value of honesty and communication, doesn't go overboard on teen culture. Loaded with clever touches, his first directorial effort moves along adroitly, capturing the giddiness and anxiety of first love.

Chattering in overdrive, the charismatic Cusack makes Lloyd an extremely likable nut. A strong cast that includes his sister Joan provides appealing support. On the down side, the story is too simple and has little momentum. The audience is unfairly expected to suspend disbelief about too many critical issues. Still, *Say Anything* is a heartwarming love story offering thoughtful words of encouragement to those who value intelligence.

I'm not sure what *Getting It Right* means to say, unless it's that there's hope for shy, virgin hairdressers. Mild Gavin Lamb (Birdsall) is 31, lives with his horrid parents and works at an old ladies hair salon in London. In the interest of expanding Gavin's retarded social life, a gay friend drags him to a posh party where he meets Joan (Redgrave), an un-

continued on page 108

REVIEWED

THE RACHEL PAPERS
1989. Dexter Fletcher, Ione Skye, Jonathan Pryce, James Spader; wr./dir. Damian Harris. 92m. (R) St cc $79.98. CBS/Fox. V image: good.

SAY ANYTHING...
1989. John Cusack, Ione Skye, John Mahoney; wr./dir. Cameron Crowe. 100m. (PG-13) St cc $89.98. CBS/Fox. V image: good.

GETTING IT RIGHT
1989. Jesse Birdsall, Helena Bonham Carter, Lynn Redgrave, Jane Horrocks; dir. Randal Kleiser. 101m. (R) St cc $89.98. MCEG. V image: good.

BY RICHARD GEHR

Comedy

Scrooged, the lucrative Bill Murray vehicle, hilariously begins with promotional spots for three fake TV shows – *The Night the Reindeer Died*, *Bob Goulet's Old Fashioned Cajun Christmas* and *Father Loves Beaver*. Then it gets really absurd. Dredging up all the self-obsessed, manipulative Sammy Glick-ness he can muster, Murray plays a callous network TV president overseeing a cheesy live version of Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*. The exec's life conveniently parallels this special from hell as he's visited by the manic and sadistic ghosts of Christmases past (David Johansen), present (Carol Kane) and future (a monster with a TV-set face).

Scrooged bears the demonic comic imprint of Michael O'Donoghue, who helped write the film. Like O'Donoghue's cynical and perverse work for *National Lampoon* and *Saturday Night Live*, the humor in *Scrooged* is both brainy and cruel: when mice with antlers are needed, Murray suggests stapling the antlers to their heads. And the sly toss-offs and subtle visual gags make the video eminently replayable.

Indeed, the film's terrific shtick, expensive effects and bizarre walk-ons (Robert Mitchum, Buddy Hackett, Bobcat Goldthwait, John Forsythe, Miles Davis and Jamie Farr are just a few of the notables who pop up) go a long way toward justifying its costly budget. Despite its hipper-than-thou irony, *Scrooged* actually makes the Christmas message more palatable for the bah-humbuggers in our midst. You'll be a better person for it. Sort of.

Holiday Seasoning: David Johansen (left) takes Bill Murray on a cab ride to his past in *Scrooged*.

Cheerleader: Shelley Long as the hapless scoutmaster of *Troop Beverly Hills*.

Pia Zadora, Dr. Joyce Brothers and Robin Leach ooze to the surface in *Troop Beverly Hills*. Unfortunately, the result is infinitely less amusing. As the leader of her daughter's upscale troop of Wilderness Girls (their projects include describing fall fashions to the blind), ditzy Shelley Long plays a wealthier, more vapid version of the same pretentious bimbo she created for *Cheers*. Numbingly unfunny, this purported comedy's laughs all stem from the dated premise that mindless consumerism among the rich is A-Okay.

Surprisingly, the excellent British comedy *How to Get Ahead in Advertising* covers much the same moral ground as *Scrooged* and *Troop Beverly Hills*. However, it packs a downbeat punch. Written and directed by Bruce Robinson (*Withnail and I*), the film depicts the mental breakdown of a successful advertising executive whose self-loathing manifests itself in a pimple on his neck that gradually mutates into an evil twin head. Richard E. Grant is splendid as a schizophrenically distraught company man battling his own tendencies toward greed and consumerism.

One of the more common themes seen in sitcoms uses the premise of a father protecting his teenaged daughter from her own sexuality. This notion is carried to an ugly extreme in *She's Out of Control*, in which tough but lovable TV stud Tony Danza plays the supposedly

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REVIEWED

SCROOGED
1989. Bill Murray, Karen Allen, Bobcat Goldthwait, Carol Kane; co-pr./dir. Richard Donner. 101m. (PG-13) ss cc Price n.a. Paramount. V image: good.

TROOP BEVERLY HILLS
1989. Shelley Long, Craig T. Nelson, Betty Thomas, Mary Gross; dir. Jeff Kanew. 105m. (PG) ss cc $89.95. RCA/Columbia. V image: good.

HOW TO GET AHEAD IN ADVERTISING
1989. Richard E. Grant, Rachel Ward; wr./dir. Bruce Robinson. 95m. (R) St cc $89.95. LV also. Virgin. V image: good.

SHE'S OUT OF CONTROL
1989. Tony Danza, Catherine Hicks, Ami Dolenz, Wallace Shawn; dir. Stan Dragoti. 97m. (PG) ss cc $89.95. RCA/Columbia. V image: good.

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ORION PICTURES Release

Kidvid

A cornucopia of Christmas collectibles

BY MARIANNE MEYER

Repeatability and attractive prices make kidvid a great holiday gift idea. A good show can liven up family gatherings and help ward off the post-holiday blues. If you haven't been strapped to Voyager 2, you know by now that some top feature titles are coming out this season: a strong group, with a few caveats.

Remember that youngest viewers (under five or so) may find the death of *Bambi*'s mom or the raging forest fire too intense. The rest of the family, however, will delight in the latest—and one of the most beautiful—of the Disney classics to make it to home video ($26.99).

With its sultry undertones and visual onslaught, *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* (Touchstone, $22.99) is actually more appropriate for the 10-and-up crowd than the young ones. As a tour de force mix of animation and live action, it's an astounding special effects treat, and the plot has great gags and heart.

The Wizard of Oz (MGM/UA, $24.95) is celebrating its 50th anniversary with a special new edition that includes a video scrapbook of rare footage and a 32-page booklet. Unfortunately, a commercial is also part of the package. Classics should have more class. *The land Before Time* (MCA, $24.95) which also includes a commercial, is not nearly as good a film as its hype suggests (see last month's "Kidvid").

So how about some alternatives? Preschoolers love videos and parents love to feel their kids are watching something worthwhile. *Richard Scarry's Best ABC Video Ever* and his *Best Counting Video Ever* (Random House, $14.95 ea.) offer the popular characters of Busytown in animated mini-tales that enhance preschool skills. The delightful new Dr. Seuss "Beginner Book Video" series (Random House, $9.95 ea.) teaches kids the sheer joy of wordplay. Each tape includes three Seuss adaptions, like *One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish* grouped with *Oh, the Thinks You Can Think* and *The Foot Book*. That's a triple treat.

For kids from about five to ten, there's a selection of storytelling videos really worth cheering. The latest titles in

the "Rabbit Ears" storybook series, a longstanding favorite of this column, carry on the high standards: *How the Leopard Got His Spots* features Danny Glover reading the Rudyard Kipling fable, and Ladysmith Black Mambazo (the African vocal group that aided Paul Simon on *Graceland*) providing the musical accompaniment. On *The Three Billy Goats Gruff and The Three Little Pigs*, Holly Hunter gives a narrative twang to two classic tales, while new age pianist Art Lande provides a pleasing musical backdrop (SVS, $14.95 ea.)

A strong new challenger in the storybook adaptation market is "Stories to Remember" (Hi-Tops, $14.95 ea.). Similar to the "Rabbit Ears" collection, quality performers in narration and music are matched to lovingly illustrated classic tales. Mia Farrow's tender rendition of *Beauty and the Beast* is enhanced by an orchestral score and gorgeous graphics. James Earl Jones and former Police drummer Stewart Copeland add their talents to *Noah's Ark*.

Shelley Duvall's "Faerie Tale Theatre" series broke new ground in kidvid with live-action adaptations of childhood favorites, starring some of Hollywood's biggest names. Her "Tall Tales & Legends" series carries on that tradition of quality by giving new life to old myths. *Johnny Appleseed* stars Martin Short, Rob Reiner and Molly Ringwald in the story of the generous planter, while *Annie Oakley* offers Jamie Lee Curtis in the title role of this colorful Western legend (CBS/Fox, $19.98 ea.).

Musical shows are another preteen favorite. Sharon, Lois & Bram have two new titles in their set of song-filled kidvids. *Back by Popular Demand—Live* is a compilation of tunes recorded in live performance, while *Treasure Island* (both A&M, $14.98 ea.) is a half-hour episode from their popular Nickelodeon series, *The Elephant Show*.

With Batmania sweeping the nation, youngsters might get a kick out of learning about the real thing. *Strange Creatures of the Night* (Vestron, $29.98) is a *National Geographic* special that focuses on the bizarre world of nocturnal creatures, from bats and owls to wild hyenas. *Nat Geo*'s usual magnificent footage becomes even more striking when you realize it was shot in the dark.

The Baseball Card Collector (Best Film & Video, $19.99) is packed with sports trivia and archival footage about baseball cards that are sure to intrigue

JIMMY LONGACRE

Kidvid

young collectors (actually, it's kind of interesting even if you *don't* buy or trade them!). Serious collectors might opt for the more extensive (60m., $29.99) version of this hobby-oriented show.

NINTENDO BREAKERS

I barely know how to load a Nintendo cartridge, so I asked my 10- and 13-year-old nephews, joystickers supreme, to rate *Secret Video Game Tricks, Codes and Strategies* (MPI, 2 volumes, $19.95 each), which offer the passwords, special controller movements and other fancy maneuvers for dozens of the most popular video games. They said, yes, indeed, the tapes helped them to "power up." If it doesn't sound like...well...*cheating* to you, these tapes could make a holiday hit with the videogame fanatics in your house.

The best gift videos are ones the entire family can enjoy. Classic cartoons fit the bill. Prepare your friends for the 1990 celebration of Bugs Bunny's 50th birthday (and pay tribute to the late great Mel Blanc) with a slew of classic Loony Tune adventures. The Warner Bros. new "Golden Jubilee Collection" ($14.95 ea.) offers funny moments with Wile E. Coyote, Sylvester and Tweety and others. The "Cartoon Moviestars" series (MGM/UA, $14.95 ea.) also presents a selection of faves like *Bugs!*, *Daffy!*, *Elmer!* and *Porky!*

If you're willing to turn your holiday party into a hit TV series, the super sloppy folks at *Double Dare* are willing to share some tips. *How to Throw a Double Dare Party* (Elektra, $14.95) includes highlights from the series, but it's 85 percent new material: hints of good (mostly) clean fun in imaginative party games. Sloppier versions of some activities are described for those with access to a rec (wreck?) room.

Three for the Tree: Martin Short in *Johnny Appleseed* (above), a spooked cat from Warner's "Golden Jubilee Collection" of Loony Tunes and the Panther as Santa in *A Pink Christmas* (below).

'The best gift videos are ones the entire family can enjoy, and classic cartoons featuring loony favorites fit the bill.'

Every December, I scan the TV listings for *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*, a puppet version of the familiar holiday tale told and sung by Burl Ives. I'm not alone—it was the highest rated holiday network special of 1988. We don't need *TV Guide* this year, though—Rudolph is finally available on home video (Family $14.95).

The Pink Panther in 'A Pink Christmas' (MGM/UA, $14.95) is another newcomer to home video, an animated adaptation of O. Henry's short story *The Cop and the Anthem*. Finally, *Hanna-Barbera's Christmas Sing-Along* (Hanna-Barbera, $14.95) features footage of the Jetsons, Flintstones and Yogi Bear, with newly arranged versions of favorite Christmas carols.

If you want to fine-tune your gift-giving even further, a new book can help. (It also makes a great gift in itself.) *The Parents' Choice Guide to Videocassettes for Children* (Consumer Reports Books, $13.95) arranges over 300 tapes into 12 subject areas (like music/dance or sports), with detailed suggestions aimed at specific age groups. Each video discussed is complemented by a suggested reading list of two books. A list of sources and a title index makes this a handy reference tool for parents. ■

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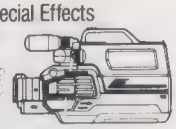

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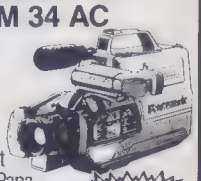

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EDITED BY STEVE DALY

Directory

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH

The Adventures of Baron Munchausen
1989. John Neville, Eric Idle, Oliver Reed, Uma Thurman, Robin Williams; co-wr./dir. Terry Gilliam. Overstuffed, vulgar, intermittently dazzling fantasy. 126m. (PG) ss cc $89.95. RCA/Columbia.

A World Apart
1988. Barbara Hershey, David Suchet, Jeroen Krabbe; dir. Chris Menges. Drama based on case of South African journalist imprisoned in '63 for her ties to anti-apartheid activists. Hershey fine in lead role. 114m. (PG) ss cc $89.95. Also Sp. sub. version. Media.

Batman
1989. Michael Keaton, Jack Nicholson, Kim Basinger, Robert Wuhl; dir. Tim Burton. Cowled crimefighter faces his chief nemesis, the Joker. Stylish visuals and Nicholson's inspired mugging help bolster botched script. Includes Diet Coke commercial. 126m. (PG-13) ss cc $24.98. Warner.

Cartoons for Big Kids
1989 comp. Anim. Host Leonard Maltin. Salute to theatrical shorts of '30s and '40s includes complete cartoons *King-Size Canary* (dir. Tex Avery), *The Great Piggy Bank Robbery* (dir. Robert Clampett), *The Big Snooze* (Clampett), *Red Hot Riding Hood* (Avery). 44m. $19.98. Turner.

Cosmos
1980. Host Carl Sagan; dir. Adrian Malone. Episodes of Public TV series exploring man's place in the universe. 13 cas. *The Shores of the Cosmic Ocean, One Voice in the Cosmic Fugue, The Harmony of Worlds, Heaven and Hell, Blues for a Red Planet, Travellers' Tales, The Backbone of Night, Travels in Space and Time, The Lives of Stars, The Edge of Forever, The Persistence of Memory, Encyclopaedia Galactia, Who Speaks for Earth?*. Also made-for-video episode, *Discussions with Dr. Carl Sagan* (1989). 52-65m. ea. St $19.98 ea. Turner.

Shock Corrida: Antonio Banderas as the former bullfighter in *Matador*, Pedro Almodovar's tense romance.

Getting It Right
1989. Jesse Birdsall, Lynn Redgrave, Helena Bonham Carter, Peter Cook, John Gielgud; dir. Randal Kleiser. Excellent British cast in comedy about an introverted hairdresser and the three women who spark his sexual awakening. (R) ss cc $89.95. MCEG.

Ghostbusters II
1989. Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd, Sigourney Weaver, Harold Ramis, Rick Moranis; wr. Ramis, Aykroyd; pr./dir. Ivan Reitman. So-so sequel with standout performance by Peter MacNicol as unctuous art-museum curator. 102m. (PG) ss cc $89.95. RCA/Columbia.

Gone with the Wind
1939. Clark Gable, Vivien Leigh, Leslie Howard, Olivia de Havilland; pr. David O. Selznick; dir. Victor Fleming. 50th-anniversary reissue of the Civil War soap opera, transferred from restored negative. 222m. (G) ss $89.95. MGM/UA.

Holiday Affair
1949. B&W. Robert Mitchum, Janet Leigh, Wendell Corey; dir. Don Hartman. War widow juggles two suitors. Pleasant Christmas romance for those in the mood. 87m. $19.98. Turner.

JFK: The Day the Nation Cried
1988. B&W/color. Host James Earl Jones. Review of political career, newsreel footage of the assassination, reminiscences by Tip

See next page for key to abbreviations.

Labels For Less

To mark its tenth year in home video and its leadership role in price reductions for hit movies, **Paramount** declares itself "Still the Best Show in Town" with $19.95 reissues of *Planes, Trains and Automobiles, Eddie Murphy—Raw, Beverly Hills Cop II, The Untouchables, She's Having a Baby* and five more best sellers. The same promotion offers $29.95 double cassettes of *The Ten Commandments* (with restored color and a vivid, cleaned-up Dolby surround soundtrack), *The Godfather, The Godfather Part II, In Harm's Way, Paint Your Wagon, War and Peace* and *Reds*.

CBS/Fox pours "La Creme de la Creme," skimming prices to $19.98 on *Big, A Fish Called Wanda, Broadcast News, Little Big Man, The African Queen, Charly, Papillon, Harry & Tonto, The Man Who Would Be King* and *The April Fools*.

MGM/UA dusts off "1939 Classics" *Ninotchka, The Women, Dark Victory, Babes in Arms, Goodbye Mr. Chips* and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, now $24.95 each. More recent titles reduced to $19.95 include *Moonstruck, The Manchurian Candidate, The French Lieutenant's Woman, Yentl, Bright Lights, Big City* and *Fatal Beauty*. —SD

Al Pacino in *The Godfather*

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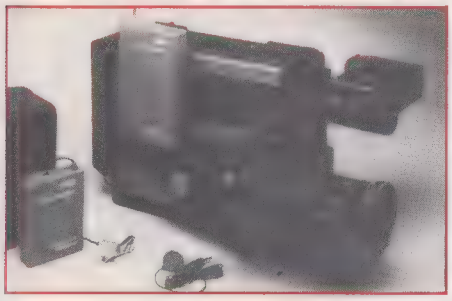

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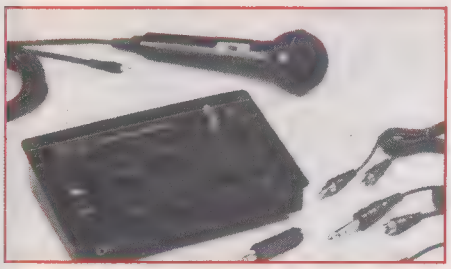

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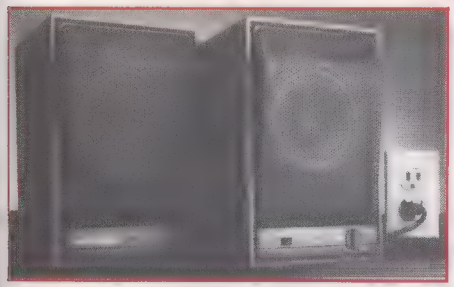

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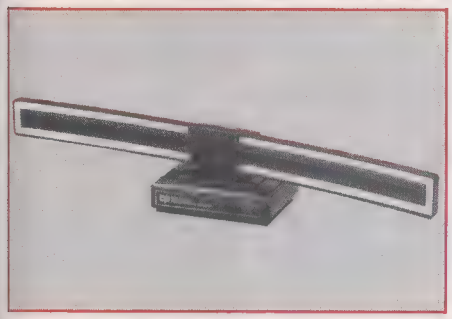

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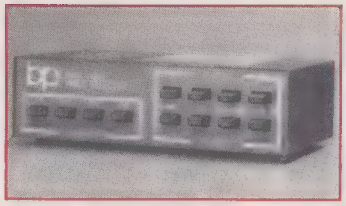

BP Video Selector

• Watch a regular channel while recording any pay TV channel or vice versa • Accepts up to 6 inputs and directs them to 3 outputs • VCR compatible switch avoids signal loss incurred by splitters • Cables sold separately.

Model V-4803 **$34.95**

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• Connect 2 VCR's for duplicating tapes • Built-in enhancer restores sharpness and detail to video copies • Enhances stereo and mono • Built-in, long-life gold connectors.

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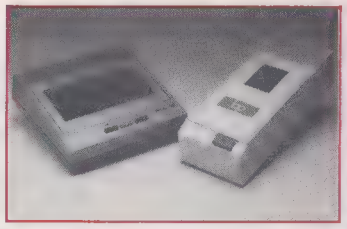

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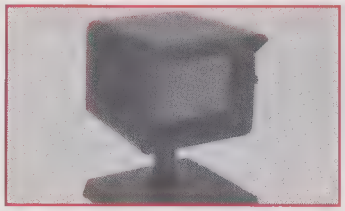

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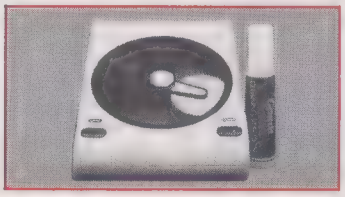

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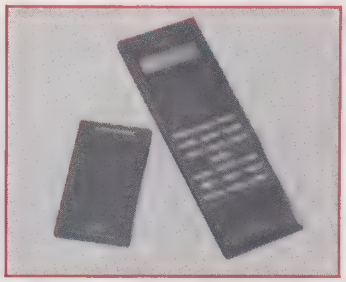

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• "Learns" existing infrared functions for TV's, VCR's, Cable TV... • CP-4 does the job of 4 separate remotes • CP-8 does the job of 8 remotes **plus** sequence, clock and timer features • CP-8 has LCD display, power booster, memory back-up & extended range • Both use 4 "AA" batteries

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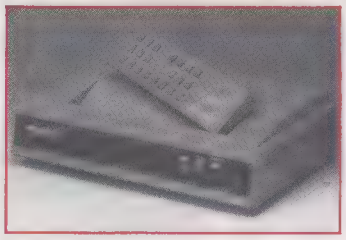

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O'Neill, Coretta King, Arthur Schlesinger Jr., others. 60m. $19.95. VIEW.

John Huston: The Man, the Movies, the Maverick
1989. Color/B&W. Host Robert Mitchum; wr./dir. Frank Martin. Portrait of the film director includes interviews with Paul Newman, Anjelica Huston, Lauren Bacall, Michael Caine, Arthur Miller, clips from *African Queen, Maltese Falcon, Prizzi's Honor.* 128m. $29.98. Turner.

Jose Carreras Comeback Recital in Spain
1989. Concert taped at Peralada Castle. One of tenor's first appearances after two-year bout with leukemia. 82m. $19.95. Kultur.

The Last Days of Pompeii
1935. B&W. Preston Foster, Basil Rathbone, Dorothy Wilson, Alan Hale, Louis Calhern; dir. Ernest B. Schoedsack. Blacksmith turns gladiator. Storyline creaks, but climactic scenes of volcanic destruction still amaze. 96m. $19.98. Turner.

Lean on Me
1989. Morgan Freeman, Robert Guillaume; dir. John G. Avildsen. Docu-drama about principal Joe Clark's efforts to rehabilitate crime-ridden New Jersey high school. Packs an admirable emotional punch even as it weaves troubling number of fabrications into the tale. 109m. (PG-13) ss cc $89.95. Warner.

Matador
1986. Assumpta Serna, Antonio Banderas, Nacho Martiniez, Carmen Maura; wr./dir. Pedro Almodovar. Dangerous romance between retired bullfighter and feminist lawyer who share predilection for murdering bed partners. Acclaimed director's best work to date. 107m. (NR) sub. $79.95. Cinevista.

Miss Firecracker
1989. Holly Hunter, Mary Steenburgen, Tim Robbins, Alfre Woodard; dir. Thomas Schlamme. Robbins and Steenburgen shine in otherwise grating adaptation of Beth Henley play. 102m. (PG) ss cc V only. $89.99. HBO.

Monday Night Madness: The Very Best of Monday Night Football
1989 comp. Host Frank Gifford; pr. David Stern. 20th-anniversary tribute features Joe Namath, Terry Bradshaw, Joe Montana, Dan Marino, O.J. Simpson; music video by Hank Williams Jr. more. 50m. St $19.98. CBS/Fox. ▶

PROGRAM LEGEND

DATE
Varies according to type of program.
Films: original theatrical release.
Made-for-broadcast: first telecast.
Made-for-video: first release in any format.
Compilations: production of collected work.

FORMAT
All tape programs are available in Beta and VHS unless noted.
B: Beta cassette
V: VHS cassette
8: 8mm cassette
LV: videodisc in **CLV** or **CAV** format.

AUDIO
All available info is provided. Tapes generally have **Hi**-fi tracks; discs are **CX** encoded.
St: stereo
ss: Dolby surround stereo
cc: closed-captioned

IMAGE RATING
For theatrical releases, ratings of **excel.**, **good**, **fair** and **poor** refer to transfer quality and visual appearance; for non-theatrical programs, to overall visual quality.

ETCETERA
Official MPAA ratings (G, PG, PG-13, R, X) are noted when available. All programs are in color unless noted.
anim: animated
B&W: black & white
cas.: videocassette
comp.: compilation
czd.: colorized
dig.: digital
dir.: directed by
dub.: dubbed
let.: letterboxed
m.: minutes
n.a.: not available
nar.: narrated by
NR: not rated
pr.: produced by
RE: reissue
sim.: simulated
Sp.: Spanish
sub.: subtitled
TVM: made for television
wr.: written by
2ap: second audio channel

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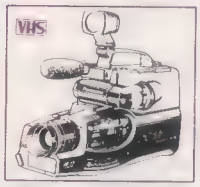

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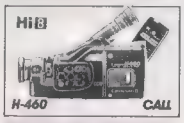

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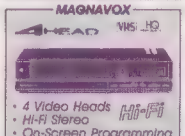

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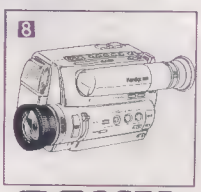

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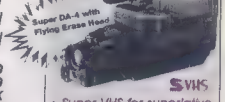

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The Story of Vernon and Irene Castle
1939. B&W. Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers, Edna May Oliver, Walter Brennan; dir. H.C. Potter. Agreeable musical bio of dance team popular in early 1900s. 93m. $19.98. Turner.

Tom & Jerry's 50th Birthday Classic
1989 comp. Anim. Dir. William Hanna, Joseph Barbera. Includes violent duo's debut, *Puss Gets the Boot* (1940), Academy Award-winner *Yankee Doodle Mouse* ('43), 6 more cartoons. 57m. $14.95. MGM/UA.

We the Living
1942. B&W. Alida Valli, Rossano Brazzi; dir. Goffredo Alessandrini. Italian-made adaptation of Ayn Rand novel set in 1920s USSR. Banned by Fascist leaders after its debut, film was reissued here in 1988 to glowing reviews. 174m. 2 cas. sub. $79.95. JCI.

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1989. Wr./dir. Goldthwait. Volatile comic in standup routine taped in San Francisco. 54m. ss V only. $59.99. HBO.

Ernest Saves Christmas
1988. Jim Varney, Noelle Parker, Oliver Clark; dir. John Cherry. Pesky hayseed Ernest fills in for retired St. Nick. 91m. (PG) ss cc $89.95. Touchstone.

I Dream Too Much
1935. B&W. Lily Pons, Henry Fonda, Eric Blore, Lucille Ball; dir. John Cromwell. Opera star Pons plays music student whose marriage crumbles as she launches successful singing career. 95m. $19.98. Turner.

Look Who's Laughing
1941. B&W. Edgar Bergen (with Charlie McCarthy), Jim and Marion Jordan (Fibber

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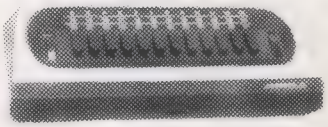

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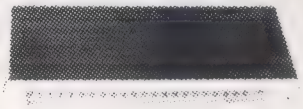

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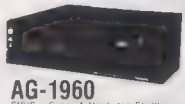

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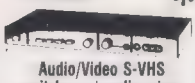

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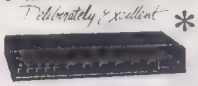

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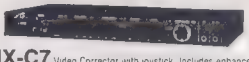

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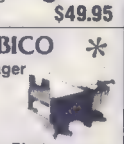

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McGee and Molly), Lucille Ball; dir. Allan Dwan. Radio great's plane crash-lands, involving him in local dispute. 78m. $19.98. Turner.

The Rachel Papers
1989. Ione Skye, James Spader, Dexter Fletcher; dir. Damien Harris. British computer whiz infatuated with American coed. 92m. (R) cc ss $79.98. CBS/Fox.

Seven Days' Leave
1942. B&W. Lucille Ball, Victor Mature, Harold Peary; dir. Tim Whelan. Army private must marry within a week to inherit fortune. 87m. $19.98. Turner.

The Strong Man
1926. Harry Langdon, Gertrude Astor; co-wr./dir. Frank Capra. Silent comedy with orchestral score: War vet in circus searches America for girl whose letters got him through combat. 78m. $39.99. HBO.

Sweet Lies
1988. Treat Williams, Joanna Pacula, Julianne Phillips, Norbert Weisser; dir. Nathalie Delon. Insurance investigator trails fraud-case culprit to Paris. 86m. (R) cc ss $79.98. CBS/Fox.

Sweet Movie
1974. Ann Lonnberg; wr./dir. Dusan Makavejev. Shocking, gleefully obscene sociopolitical satire follows two women's erotic odysseys. Makes John Waters look tame. (NR) $79.95. Facets.

Three Fugitives
1989. Nick Nolte, Martin Short, James Earl Jones, Sarah Rowland Doroff; wr./dir. Francis Veber. Inept bank robber grabs ex-con as hostage, leading police to believe latter planned the crime. 96m. (PG-13) ss cc $89.95. Touchstone.

DRAMA

Break of Hearts
1935. B&W. Katharine Hepburn, Charles Boyer, John Beal; dir. Philip Moeller. Music-world melodrama: Struggling composer (Hepburn) marries established conductor. 80m. $19.98. Turner.

Broken Blossoms
1919. B&W with color tints. Lillian Gish, Richard Barthelmess, Donald Crisp; wr./dir. D.W. Griffith. Silent melodrama: Chinese man in love with woman abused by drunken father. Features new recording of

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VG7615	VG7925
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VG7685	VG7985

RCA CAMCORDERS

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CC280	CC320
CC285	CC360

GE CAMCORDERS

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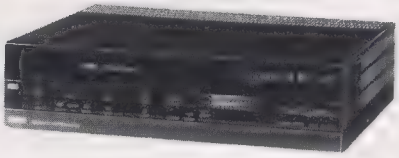
CG9808	CG9825
CG9810	



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original score, introduction by Gish. 95m. $39.99. HBO.

The Christmas Wife
1988. Jason Robards, Julie Harris; dir. David Jones. Widower facing first holiday season alone finds companionship by answering personal ad. 73m. ss cc $79.99. HBO.

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See *Drama*. dig. $39.95. Image.

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McGee and Molly), Lucille Ball; dir. Allan Dwan. Radio great's plane crash-lands, involving him in local dispute. 78m. $19.98. Turner.

The Rachel Papers
1989. Ione Skye, James Spader, Dexter Fletcher; dir. Damien Harris. British computer whiz infatuated with American coed. 92m. (R) cc ss $79.98. CBS/Fox.

Seven Days' Leave
1942. B&W. Lucille Ball, Victor Mature, Harold Peary; dir. Tim Whelan. Army private must marry within a week to inherit fortune. 87m. $19.98. Turner.

The Strong Man
1926. Harry Langdon, Gertrude Astor; co-wr./dir. Frank Capra. Silent comedy with orchestral score: War vet in circus searches America for girl whose letters got him through combat. 78m. $39.99. HBO.

Sweet Lies
1988. Treat Williams, Joanna Pacula, Julianne Phillips, Norbert Weisser; dir. Nathalie Delon. Insurance investigator trails fraud-case culprit to Paris. 86m. (R) cc ss $79.98. CBS/Fox.

Sweet Movie
1974. Ann Lonnberg; wr./dir. Dusan Makavejev. Shocking, gleefully obscene sociopolitical satire follows two women's erotic odysseys. Makes John Waters look tame. (NR) $79.95. Facets.

Three Fugitives
1989. Nick Nolte, Martin Short, James Earl Jones, Sarah Rowland Doroff; wr./dir. Francis Veber. Inept bank robber grabs ex-con as hostage, leading police to believe latter planned the crime. 96m. (PG-13) ss cc $89.95. Touchstone.

DRAMA

Break of Hearts
1935. B&W. Katharine Hepburn, Charles Boyer, John Beal; dir. Philip Moeller. Music-world melodrama: Struggling composer (Hepburn) marries established conductor. 80m. $19.98. Turner.

Broken Blossoms
1919. B&W with color tints. Lillian Gish, Richard Barthelmess, Donald Crisp; wr./dir. D.W. Griffith. Silent melodrama: Chinese man in love with woman abused by drunk-

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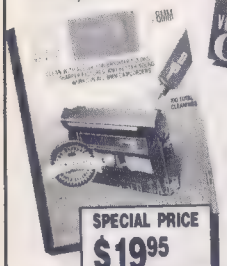

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Juliet of the Spirits
1965. Giulietta Masina; co-wr./dir. Federico Fellini. Drama/fantasy. 145m. let. dig. $49.95. Image.

Lawrence of Arabia
1962. Peter O'Toole; dir. David Lean. Classic epic restored to original colors, full length. 218m. (G) ss. Three disc versions: 4-sided CLV with supplementary materials, dig. let. $69.95; and 8-sided CAV with still-photo collection, dig. let. $124.95. Criterion (3M pressings). Additional CLV version, let. cc $49.95. RCA/Columbia (Pioneer pressing).

The Magnificent Seven
1960. Steve McQueen, Yul Brynner, Charles Bronson. Action. 126m. side 3 CAV let. dig. $39.95. MGM/UA.

Network
1976. Faye Dunaway, Peter Finch. Satire. 121m. (R) dig. 3 sides. $39.95. MGM/UA.

Show Boat
1936. B&W. Irene Dunne, Allan Jones, Paul Robeson. Musical. Includes commentary by Miles Kreuger on 2ap, excerpts of 1929 film version, 1932 Broadway revival, still-photo collection, more. 113m. plus supplements. CAV dig. 6 sides. $124.95. CLV $49.95. Criterion.

Sleeper
1973. Woody Allen, Diane Keaton. Comedy. 88m. (PG) $34.95. MGM/UA.

Some Like It Hot
1959. B&W. Jack Lemmon, Tony Curtis; dir. Billy Wilder. Comedy. Features interview with Lemmon on 2ap, production photos, more. 119m. plus. CAV dig. 5 sides. $124.95. Criterion.

West Side Story
1961. Dir. Robert Wise, Jerome Robbins. Musical. Interview with Wise on 2ap, footage of premiere, reissue trailer, storyboards, design sketches. 151m. plus. (G) let. ss dig. CAV 6 sides. $124.95. CLV 3 sides. $59.95. Criterion.

You Only Live Twice
1967. Sean Connery. Action. 116m. (PG) ss dig. let. $34.95. MGM/UA.

SOURCES

Tapes and discs are not available for sale directly from companies listed unless the phone number given specifies "orders." See end of listings for phone/mail-order distributors that may be able to help locate desired releases.

CBS/Fox Video, 1211 Sixth Ave., New York, NY 10036; 212-819-3200.

Cinevesta, 353 West 39th St., New York, NY 10018; 212-947-4373.

Connoisseur Video, 8436 West 3rd St., Los Angeles, CA 90048; 213-653-8873.

The **Criterion** Collection, Voyager Co., 1351 Pacific Coast Hwy., Santa Monica, CA 90401; 213-451-1383, orders 800-446-2001, in CA 800-443-2001.

Facets Multimedia, 1517 West Fullerton Ave., Chicago, IL 60614; orders 800-331-6197.

Family Home Entertainment: see **IVE**.

HBO Video, 1100 Sixth Ave., New York, NY 10036; 212-512-1000.

Hi-Tops: see **Media**.

Image Entertainment (Videodiscs), 6311 Romaine St., Hollywood, CA 90038; 213-468-8867.

IVE, 15400 Sherman Way, P.O. Box 10124, Van Nuys, CA 91410-0124; 818-908-0303.

JCI Video, 21550 Oxnard St., Woodland Hills, CA 91367; 818-593-3600.

Kultur Videograms, 121 Hwy. 36, W. Long Branch, NJ 07764; 201-229-2343, orders 800-4-KULTUR.

LumiVision, 1490 Lafayette St., Denver, CO 80218; 303-860-0400.

MCEG, 2400 Broadway Ave., Santa Monica, CA 90404; 213-315-7800.

Media Home Entertainment, 5730 Buckingham Pkwy., Culver City, CA 90230; 213-216-7900.

MGM/UA Home Video, 10000 Washington Blvd., Culver City, CA 90232; 213-280-6000, orders 800-443-5500 ext. 798.

Orion Home Video, 410 Park Ave., New York, NY 10022; 212-888-4500.

Paramount Home Video, 5555 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90038-3197; 213-468-5000.

Pioneer LDCA, 2265 East 220 St., Long Beach, CA 90810; 213-835-6177.

RCA/Columbia Pictures Home Video, 3500 West Olive Ave., Burbank, CA 91505; 818-953-7900.

Rhino Video, 2225 Colorado Ave., Santa Monica, CA 90404; 213-828-1980.

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Vestron Video, Box 10382, Stamford, CT 06901; 203-978-5400; orders ext. 2652.

VIEW Video, 34 East 23 St., New York, NY 10010; 212-674-5550.

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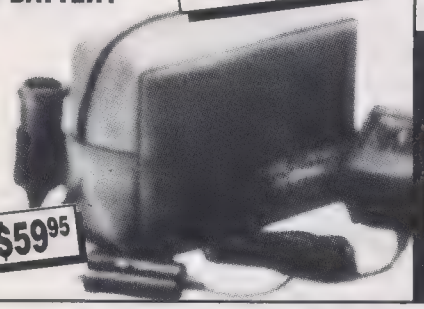

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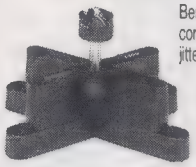

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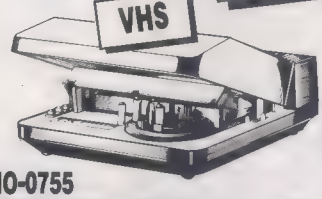

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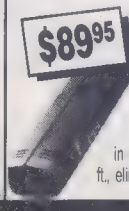

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FEEDBACK

continued from page 10

The big squeeze

I recently read about a technique that makes it possible to squeeze a 72-minute movie onto a five-inch CD. This is well and good, but how about applying the squeeze to 12-inch videodiscs? The inability to watch a movie on disc straight through has prevented me from purchasing a LaserDisc player. One must get up and flip the disc or wait for the optical reader to change position. I would love to see a disc player that could show a film like *Out of Africa* without interruption.

W. Randy Foley
Collinsville, Va.

Die-hard letterbox lover

I did not like letterboxing until I performed a test of my own. I purchased the letterboxed version of *Die Hard* on LaserDisc. Watching it the first time made me wish for my money back. However, I also rented the film on VHS cassette. I connected both my disc player and my VCR to my Pioneer SPD-452 big-screen TV and started playing both versions at once.

Switching back and forth rapidly between them let me see the difference. It sold me on letterboxing. The letterboxed LaserDisc was far superior to the full-screen VHS tape. Of course some resolution was lost, but the disc still had more than the cassette. More importantly, the color fidelity of the LaserDisc was not compromised. My mind has been changed forever. Bring on the letterboxed movies.

Roy Randolph
Cypress, Texas

Scrambled facts

Peter Dobulis made several inaccurate statements regarding the VideoCipher II Plus system ("Feedback," Sept. '89). While it is true the VideoCipher II Plus places control information in the vertical blanking interval, the Plus system is not based on the Starlok system.

The primary perceived difference between the VCII and VCII Plus systems to consumers is the number of tiers each supports—56 for the VCII and 256 for the VCII Plus. However, neither the use of the vertical or horizontal blanking intervals for control information, nor the number of tiers, renders the systems incompatible. Although VCII units cannot descramble VCII Plus control infor-

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mation, all current VCII programs will continue to be made available to VCII subscribers, with only select new services available on VCII Plus tiers.

For consumers who wish to upgrade their descramblers, General Instrument has planned an inexpensive, voluntary upgrade path that will allow VideoCipher II owners to trade in their modules for VCII Plus modules.

Michael K. Walker
VideoCipher Division
General Instrument Corp.
San Diego, Calif.

Buster hunter

Gordon McComb in "Macrovision Under the Microscope" (Oct. '89) states that Macrovision busters "are hard to find" and that "it may take some detective work to find them." In the same issue, you carried ads for six such devices. Does McComb read the magazine?

Scott Dimond
Calgary, Alberta

The article notes that the best place to start looking is the advertising sections of video and electronics magazines. ■

EDITOR'S CHOICE

continued from page 88

pleasant rich lady with a taste for young men, and Minerva Munday (Carter), a pixilated heiress with no inhibitions. One woman breaks his heart, the other drives him crazy. Both help bring him out of his shell. Having conquered his fear of women and sex, Gavin meets an even more unlikely prospect (Horrocks), and romances her as well.

Neither lighthearted nor weighty, *Getting It Right* is well made and frequently appealing, but unfocused and ambivalent. Surprisingly, this pleasant trifle faces adult sexual matters (adultery, homosexuality, promiscuity) with forthrightness and taste. The big flaw in *Getting It Right?* Figuring out what *it* is. ■

COMEDY

continued from page 89

hip, widowed father of Ami Dolenz, who has been transformed by Danza's girlfriend (Catherine Hicks) from a braces-burdened 15-year-old wallflower into a boy-hungry vixen.

With the appearance of the disappointing Wallace Shawn as a sleazy psychologist, the film downshifts into "how-to" mode (as in, *How to Stuff a Wild Bikini*). As Danza's job and relationship deteriorate, his obsession with his daughter as a sex object increases until everyone finally chills out and says, "Oh gosh, what have we done?" The film soon peters to its foregone conclusion (she returns to the boy next door). After all, what did we think father and daughter would do? Run away and get hitched? ■

TOSHIBA VCR

continued from page 47

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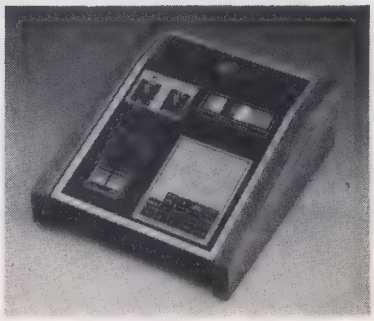

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ward (search), pause/still, stop, TV still, record, TV/VCR and audio select. Toward the right are two rows of buttons for TV/CATV, clock set, program, channel up and down, day, hour on and off, minutes on and off, SP/EP, confirm clear, audio fade, title/scanner, display, input select, repeat, index, zero return, remain, counter reset, video and audio insert, assemble edit, mark, start, edit confirm and input view. Small removable plugs cover jacks for the scanner, line 2 inputs for S-video, video and stereo audio and jacks for a microphone.

The deck's rear panel has an AC power cord and two AC receptacles. Toward the left are jacks for synchro edit, VHF/UHF input and output plus the channel 3/4 selector and the V Lock control. Below are three rows of video and stereo audio connectors. The top row is for video 1 input, the middle row is for monitor output with display characters and the bottom row is for edit output without display information. A video/S-video switch that affects only the rear panel connectors separates the bottom row from S-video connectors for input 1, monitor out and edit out.

The Toshiba deck's graphics scanner is truly unique.

The SV-R990's wedge-shaped remote control has an exposed jog/shuttle dial. A flap covers less frequently used controls.

Operation. The SV-R990's ease of use varies according to operation and the user's experience. Basic record/play functions are very easy—included is an automatic play/record sequence for tapes with no record tab. The tuner's scan sequence may be programmed to automatically receive all active channels. You may add or erase channels from the sequence.

The front timer controls include separate buttons for on and off times, while the remote features onscreen prompts for each entry. Index search is available from both the VCR and the remote. However, address and time search and the marking and erasing of address numbers can only be performed using the remote.

Because the deck's digital effects work only during playback, you'll need a second VCR to capture the effects on tape. Title generation is only possible using the remote, but an existing title or scanned graphic may be called up from either the remote or the VCR for recording. Creating a title using the jog/shuttle dial and the letter and position buttons is tedious, but not difficult.

The audio insert (dub), video insert (with hi-fi sound), A/V insert and automatic assemble editing functions are also easy to use, although beginners may have some difficulty. The manual's illustrations are very helpful, but do not compensate completely for the frustrating text. Because the deck runs a bit warm, adequate ventilation is essential. Ease of operation is good to excellent.

The SV-R990 delivers 400 lines of horizontal resolution in S-VHS mode and 240 lines in VHS mode. At SP speed, the unweighted video signal-to-noise ratio is 48.4 (47.6) decibels and the weighted video S/N is 52.6 (51.1) dB. The unweighted luminance S/N at the S-video terminal is 45.8 (45) dB and the

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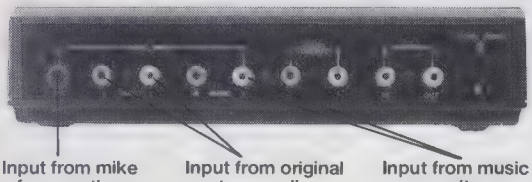

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weighted S/N is 53.4 (50.4) dB. Chroma AM S/N is 47.9 (51.9) dB and chroma PM S/N is 40.7 (51.3) dB. (See "Editor's Note" on page 50 for an explanation of the results in parenthesis.) Video quality, among the highest measured for S-VHS VCRs, is excellent.

The audio frequency response of the hi-fi tracks is 20 Hertz to 20 kilohertz, +1.2/-0.5 dB, with a dynamic range of 88.6 dB and a total harmonic distortion of 0.4 percent. At SP, the mono linear track has a -3 dB frequency response of 80 Hz to 10 kHz. At EP, it has a frequency response of 80 Hz to 6.3 kHz with an S/N of 43.1 dB and a total harmonic distortion of 1.2 percent. Audio quality is excellent.

Conclusion. Like Toshiba's previous S-VHS VCRs, the SV-R990 is an excellent video and audio performer. Its many editing, titling and digital effect features are almost overwhelming, and its graphics scanner is unique among VCR accessories. Ease of operation is good to excellent despite the deck's complexity and its poorly translated manual. At $2,199.95 it's a bit pricey, but you must consider this model if you're in the market for a sophisticated editing deck. We recommend it highly. ■

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COMBI PLAYER

continued from page 50

The front end of the remote control has a jog/shuttle dial with an on/off button and indicator plus a one-shot memory button. The color, location and size of the remaining buttons make them easy to distinguish. The power and stop/eject buttons are orange, while the side A and side B buttons are blue. The large play button is flanked by slightly smaller buttons for forward and reverse scan. Nearby are rockers for chapter/track skip forward and reverse, still/step forward and reverse, multispeed forward and reverse and +/- (which varies multispeed and digital picture functions). Other buttons handle file, pause, digital effects, still with sound, repeat A, repeat B, audio monitor analog/auto digital, CX, screen display, chapter/frame-time or track/time, program, clear, search/memory, +10 and a 10-digit keypad.

Operation. Using the CLD-91 is very easy—just look at the buttons and choose the functions you want. If you already understand the numbering systems used for laserdiscs, CDs and CD-Videos, you probably won't even need the owner's manual, except for its explanation of the file system.

CAV (standard play) discs allow access by chapter and frame number, while CLV (extended play) discs offer chapter and time access. The video portion of CD-V discs works like CLV discs, while both CDs and the audio portion of CD-Vs only have time and track functions. The CLD-91 offers easy access to all these disc divisions, although it cannot access index marks within chapters or tracks.

Play, scan, next or last chapter/track and pause functions are the same for each type of disc. Still/step, multispeed and digital effects work with all discs that have video information, while side B play works with two-sided laserdiscs. You can memorize and hold a frame of video for viewing while the deck changes sides or during play of audio-only material. You can repeat one side, both sides, one chapter or track or a whole program of chapters or tracks in any order. Ease of operation is excellent.

Performance. The CLD-91's picture quality is equal to that of the LD-S1. Its S-video out connector and time base corrector help considerably. Digital circuitry provides excellent still and multispeed play on CLV and CD-V discs and entertaining special effects. Horizontal resolution is 425 lines. The unweighted video signal-to-noise ratio is 43.6 (42.8) decibels, and the weighted

Pioneer CLD-91 Combi Player

DATA

Suggested Price: $2,000

Weight: 28.7 pounds

Dimensions: 5-1/8 x 18 x 18-7/8 inches

Power Requirements: 120 VAC, 50/60 Hz

Power Consumption: 52 W

Disc Formats: LD, CDV, CDV—12-, 8-, 5- and 3-inch discs

Play Speed Select: automatic

Still Frame: CAV and CLV discs

Frame Advance: forward and reverse

Multiple Speed Play: forward and reverse—3x, 2x, 1x, 1/2x, 1/4x, 1/8x, 1/16x, one frame every three seconds (1/90x) and one frame every second (1/30x)

Rapid Search: 5 seconds end to end

Cue & Review Search (Scan): 90 seconds end to end

Wired Remote: control in and out for SR system remote

Remote: IR wireless with jog/shuttle dial; forward/reverse rockers for still/step, chapter/track skip, multispeed and multi-use -/+; buttons for jog mode, one-shot memory, power, eject, side A, side B, file, pause, digital effects, still sound/strobe motion, reverse scan, play, forward scan, repeat A, repeat B/chapter/track/one-side/all-side/program, audio monitor, auto-digital/analog, CX, display, chapter/frame-time, program, clear, search memory, 10+ and 10-digit keypad

Separate Eject: stop/eject

Counter Digits: chapter/track—2, frame—5, or time—4 (mins:secs)

Counter Memory: two—start and end points for A-B selection

Program Start Locator/Index/Cue: chapter/track, frame/time, memory

Analog FM Audio: stereo or two mono tracks

Digital Audio: stereo or two mono tracks

Accessories: remote control with batteries, video cable, S-video cable, stereo audio cable

RESULTS

Horizontal Resolution: 425 lines

Video S/N, Unweighted: 43.6 dB

Video S/N, Weighted: 48.9 dB

Luminance S/N, Unweighted: 45.2 dB

Luminance S/N, Weighted: 50.1 dB

S/N, Chroma AM: 39.8 dB

S/N, Chroma PM: 33.5 dB

Audio Frequency Response: digital—10 Hz-20 kHz, 0.1-0.4 dB; analog—20 Hz-20 kHz, +0/-1.3 dB

S/N, Audio: digital—over 98 dB; analog—76 dB

Audio Distortion: digital—0.01% (our software limit); analog—0.02%

RATINGS

Picture Quality: excellent

Audio Quality: excellent

Operational Ease: excellent

Overall Performance: excellent

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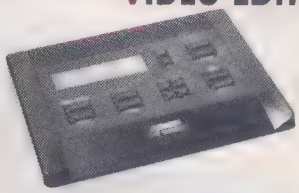

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video S/N is 48.9 (47.2) dB. The S-video weighted luminance S/N is 45.2 (41.6) dB and the weighted luminance S/N is 50.1 (43.1) dB. The chroma AM S/N is 39.8 dB and the chroma PM S/N is 33.5 (45.1) dB. (See "Editor's Note" on page 50 for an explanation of the results in parentheses.) Picture quality is excellent.

The CLD-91's eight times oversampling digital filter and 18-bit D/A converters provide digital sound comparable to that of the best CD players. The measured frequency response is 10 Hertz to 20 kilohertz, +0.1/-0.4 dB, with an audio S/N of better than 98 dB and a total harmonic distortion of 0.01 percent. Rated frequency response is 4 Hz to 20 kHz with an S/N of 106 dB and a THD of 0.0025 percent. Keep in mind that audio and video measurements of play-only equipment are limited by the software necessary for testing. Audio performance is excellent compared to other laserdisc players we've measured.

Conclusion. The Pioneer CLD-91 offers state-of-the-art performance—all its ratings are excellent. In addition, it boasts more features than any of its competitors. As a result, its $2,000 price tag should come as no surprise. A number of less expensive models are available, but the CLD-91 provides the ultimate in current laser technology. When deciding on a purchase, you'll have to weigh its features and performance against the constraints of your budget, but we recommend it highly. ■

SONY

continued from page 52

Description. The black MDP-510 has gold and silver legends. The disc table runs across the upper left side of the front panel. Toward the left are the power switch, a quarter-inch gold-plated headphone jack with volume control and a large display. Toward the right are buttons for file, index, auto program, a 10-digit keypad, 10+, repeat, picture mode, CDV and ACS/AMS forward and reverse plus a stop mode memory slide switch that lets you resume playback of LaserDiscs from the point at which play was stopped.

On the right side of the front panel is a jog/shuttle control. The shuttle ring always works as a forward/reverse scan control, but the jog dial works only while the deck is in still mode. Above the dial are three translucent buttons for picture art, stop motion and flash motion. All are backlit when engaged. The picture art function may be used in combination with the stop motion or flash motion effects. Nearby are buttons for open/close, play, pause/still and stop.

The deck's wedge-shaped remote has a flip-up cover that hides less frequently used buttons. Through the top of the flap protrude buttons for open/close, display, AV time, audio monitor and disc/TV. Exposed are the jog/shuttle dial and rockers for index search, scan and chapter/track search, plus buttons for CDV audio/video, stop, pause/still, intro search, play and jog/shuttle on/off.

Under the flap are buttons for CX, analog/digital audio switching, all the digital and multispeed effects, programming and index marking, repeat play, and search modes and play options.

Operation. Basic operations—like inserting a disc, play, pause/still, scan, intro scan, chapter/track skip and the jog/shuttle dial—are almost intuitive. Most of the other operations (including repeat, display, multiple speed play, pro-

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grammed play, shuffle play, direct access by frame or time and picture memory) are also easy to learn.

Only the index function requires explanation. In addition to accessing chapter, track and index marks encoded on a disc, the index function lets you assign up to six additional custom index points to any disc using the index file button. You can then return directly to a custom point or play (and repeat) a segment between any two custom points using the index (mode) button, the 1/ALL button or the repeat button.

A few functions, including shuffle, A-B repeat, direct access and 1/ALL custom index, can only be accessed from the remote. Basic controls that operate many Sony TV sets are an added convenience. Ease of operation is very good/excellent.

Performance. The measured performance of LaserDisc players always depends on the quality of the recorded signal on test discs. We used the Pioneer MI Reference Disc, our standard for the last two years, and the LaserVision Demonstration II disc.

The MDP-510 delivered horizontal resolution of 425 lines. The unweighted video signal-to-noise ratio is 42.3 (41.2) dB and the weighted video S/N is 48.3 (45.9) dB. The unweighted luminance S/N at the S-video connector is 40.4 (39.8) dB, while the weighted luminance S/N is 48.7 (45.8) dB. Chroma AM S/N is 45.1 (47) dB while chroma PM S/N is 37.2 (43.9) dB. As you may notice, the video and luminance figures are higher, while the chroma figures are lower, under our new filter factors (see "Editor's Note" on page 50). Video performance is very good compared with the other disc players we've measured.

Audio frequency response on digital recordings is rated from 4 Hertz to 20 kilohertz and verified from 10 Hz to 20 kHz, +0.4/-1 dB. The frequency response of the analog audio is 20 Hz to 20 kHz, +0/-3.3 dB. Audio S/N of digital material is 98 dB while audio S/N of analog material is 75 dB. The total harmonic distortion for digital sound is rated at 0.003 percent and measured as 0.01 percent (our test equipment's limit) while the THD of analog material is 0.02 percent. Audio performance is excellent.

Conclusion. The MDP-510 resembles last year's MDP-700 model in both looks and performance. The custom indexes, among other features, have been added to this year's model, and several design modifications have also been made. Overall performance is very good/excellent. At $1,100, the MDP-510 is an exceedingly good value, and we recommend it highly. ■

Next Month In VIDEO magazine

Best of the Year

A critical look back at 1989's most outstanding:

- *VCRs and camcorders*
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Everyone has a few features they wish VCRs would add. Here are our choices, from feasible to far-fetched.

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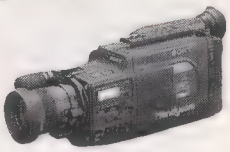

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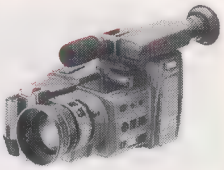

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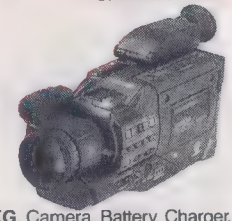

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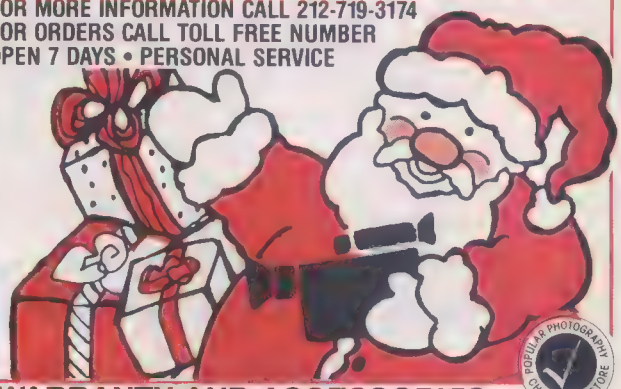

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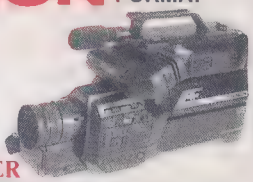

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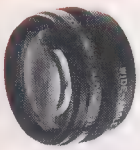

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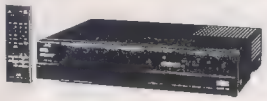

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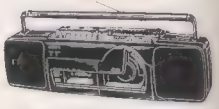

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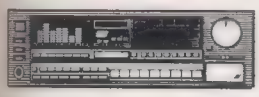

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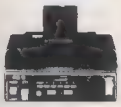

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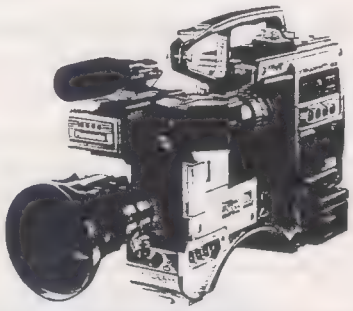

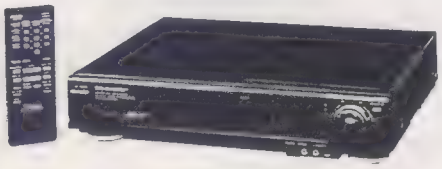

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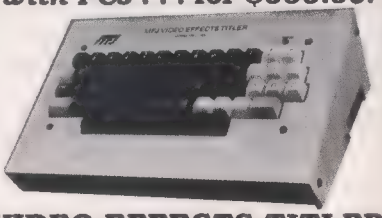

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TECH TIPS

Camcorder countdown

You can create surprisingly effective segments in your home videos by shooting a series of short fast takes; for example, shop signs in a foreign city or a montage of faces, one after another. But such segments won't work if the takes are too short for viewers to assimilate their content. Generally, shots briefer than ten seconds don't register. So silently count down from ten as you shoot the scenes, or check out Canon's 8mm camcorders, some of which offer an onscreen digital countdown just to help videographers avoid short-shrifting their shots.

Accessory remotes

If you've just purchased a recent model 8mm camcorder by Sony, Ricoh or Kyocera, you can add remote control capability with Sony's RM-95 wired remote. It controls all the camcorder's functions, including zoom. For wireless operation, try the RMR-152 IR receiver, which plugs into the same remote mini-socket on the camcorder. There's no cord to hassle with, but you'll have to give up the remote zoom feature.

Matching plugs

If you have an old Sony RM-E100 Editing Interface (introduced four years ago) and want to use it with a camcorder that has a small remote control L jack, try a Sony "pigtail adapter" (part number 1-574-118-11) for about $15. It adapts the large five-pin Control L jack to the new socket. The adapter also converts the RM-84 wired remote control for use with newer camcorders. ■

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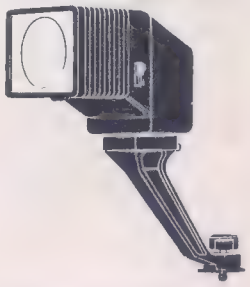

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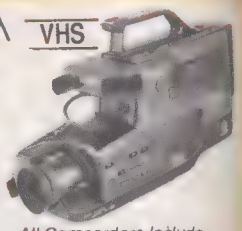

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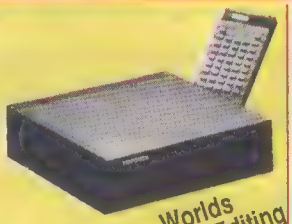

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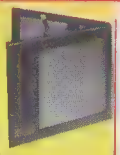

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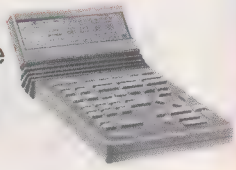

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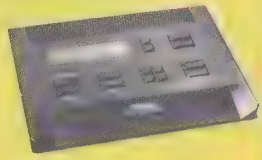

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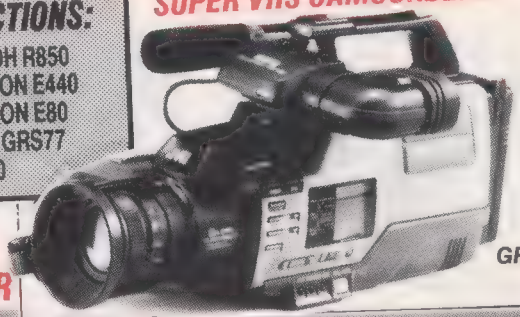

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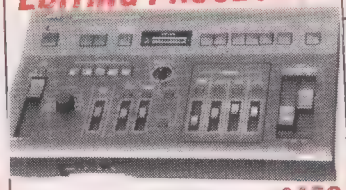

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- ☐ MAKE ME CUM

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- ☐ RIDE ME
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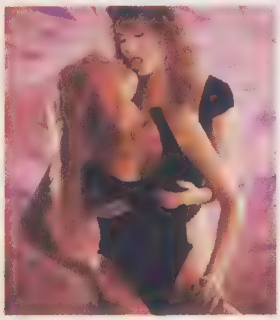

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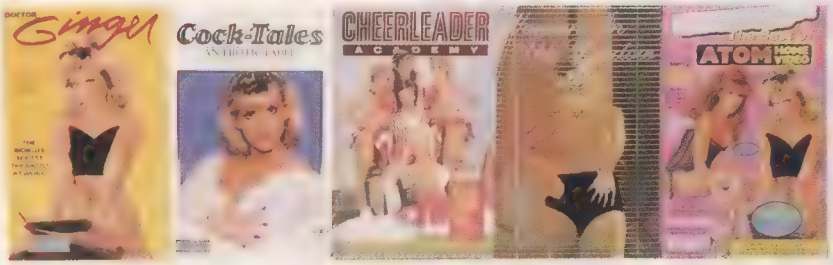

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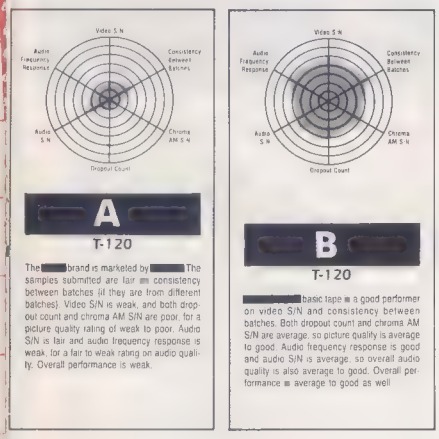

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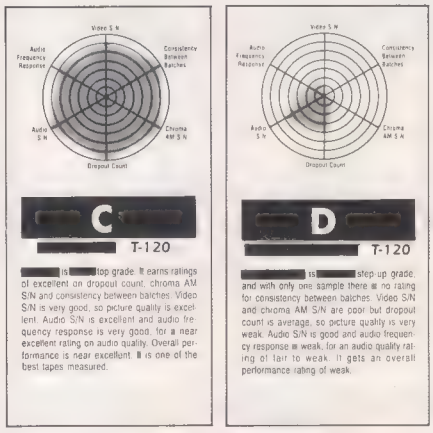

Text gives our opinion in non-technical terms.

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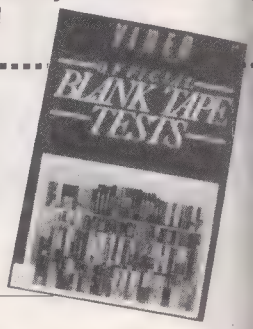

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❑ Cassie Nova	❑ Trinity Loren	❑ Tracy Adams	❑ Serena	❑ Cara Lott	❑ Tabbetha Fox	❑ Lori Lovett
❑ Siobhan Hunter	❑ Tiffany Clark	❑ Megan Leigh	❑ April May	❑ Taija Rae	❑ Carol Cummings	❑ Jessica Wilde
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❑ Stephanie Rage	❑ Nina DePonca	❑ Kaye Parker	❑ Ona Zee	❑ Busty Belle	❑ Monique DuBois	❑ Dee Dee
❑ Nicole Shannon	❑ Candi Evens	❑ Breezy Lane	❑ Stormi	❑ Mandi Wine	❑ Lauryl Canyon	❑ Cheri Hill
❑ Sharon Mitchell	❑ Brianna Starr	❑ Ebony Ayes	❑ Leah Lyons	❑ Robin Lee	❑ Brittany Stryker	❑ Sharon Kane
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Canadians remit in US funds only, no foreign COD's.
❑ Send COD. I enclose $8 extra as deposit.
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YOU'LL RECEIVE THESE 42 HOT HITS...

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FIST[redacted]	KING KONG[redacted]
ROUND POUND	BEEF STROKENOFF
GROUP JERK	GROUP GROPE
CUM ON MY FACE	ASS PLUGERS
SHOOT IT ALL	MAKE ME CUM
STROKE JOB	THIS LOADS FOR YOU
PETER EATER	BUTT REAMERS
LICKING LOADS	DOUBLE[redacted]
TAKE IT ALL	GANG JERK OFF
ALL THE WAY IN	TEN INCH CLUB
TWIN JERK OFF	FILL THE CUP
ERUPTING CUM	ON THEIR OWN
CUM SUCKER	BOTTOMS UP
ANAL PLUNGE	WET SHOTS
DEEPER THROAT	GOLDEN BOYS
SUCK THIS[redacted]	UP ALL NIGHT
UP HIS BUTT	STAINED SHEETS
GREASE THE PALM	BEND OVER

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YES!! Rush my 42 Videos! understand that if my order is placed within 30 days, I receive the CUMSHOT Video absolutely FREE!!
I've enclosed $25 (that's 1¢ plus 59¢ each for shipping). Canadians add $10, remit US funds only.
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State _____ Zip _____
Signature _____
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- ❑ Cara Lott
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- ❑ Tish Ambrose
- ❑ Keli Richards
- ❑ Buffy Davis
- ❑ Codi Nicole
- ❑ Rachel Ashley
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- ❑ Heather Wayne
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- ❑ Sharon Mitchell
- ❑ Sahara
- ❑ Linda Wong
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- ❑ Vera Butler
- ❑ Jeannie Pepper
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- ❑ Johnny Keyes
- ❑ F.M. Bradley
- ❑ Ray Victory
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- ❑ Nina DePonce
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- ❑ Lady Stephanie
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- ❑ Kristara Barrington
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- ❑ Amber Lynn
- ❑ Talja Rae
- ❑ Kim Gee
- ❑ Cheri Moon
- ❑ Kathleen Gentry
- ❑ Lynn Lemay
- ❑ Robin Lee
- ❑ Desiree Lane
- ❑ Summer Rose
- ❑ Nancy Suiter
- ❑ Sharon Kane
- ❑ Stacey Donavan
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- ❑ Aphrodite
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- ❑ Susan Hart
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Address_____
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Signature age B-date

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- ❑ BLACKS HAVE MORE [redacted]
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- ❑ 3 THE BLACK WA
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Please Specify: ❑ VHS ❑ BETA

Name_____
Address_____ Apt#_____
City_____ State_____ Zip_____
Sign/Age/Date_____
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Please Specify: ❑ VHS ❑ BETA

Name_____
Address_____ Apt#_____
City_____ State_____ Zip_____
Sign/Age/Date_____
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The preceding pages contain advertisements for adult material. The section has been sealed as an accommodation to those readers who have no interest in such materials.

The entire section is perforated at the spine so that it can be removed.

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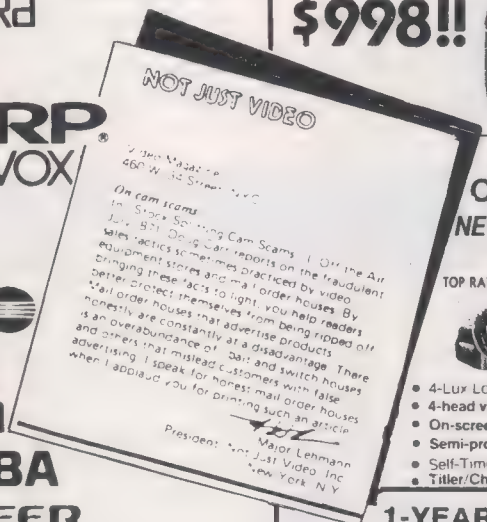
Below is a letter from our company president Major Lehmann published in the September 1987 issue of Video Magazine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On cam scams

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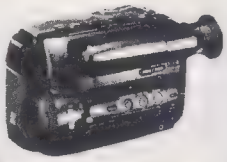

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Nikon
Hi8
New Hi-Band
VN-950

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VIDEO MAGAZINE/SCOTCH VIDEOCASSETTE VACATION VIDEO CONTEST RULES

1. Contest entries must include contestant's name, address and telephone number. Mail entries to Vacation Video Contest, Video Magazine, 460 West 34 Street, New York, New York 10001. Each entry must be accompanied by a videocassette of the entrant's vacation, and each entrant must be the original producer of the videocassette entered. All entries must be postmarked by April 2, 1990, to be eligible. Not responsible for late, lost or misdirected mail. Limit one entry per household. By entering this contest, all entrants agree that all prizes are awarded upon the condition that 3M, Video Magazine and their respective agencies and employees will have no liability whatsoever for any injuries, losses or damage of any kind resulting from the acceptance, possession or use of the prize.

2. Winners will be selected by Video Magazine. Entries will be judged on the basis of creativity, graphics, technical merit, directorial and editing skills. By entering the contest, each entrant accepts and agrees to be bound by these rules and the decision of the judges, which shall be final.

3. All entries and the videocassettes become the property of 3M. Winners will be notified by mail and required to sign an affidavit of eligibility and release which must be completed and returned within fifteen (15) days of notification or the prize will be forfeited and awarded to an alternate winner. Winners grant permission for use of their names and/or photograph in conjunction with this and future promotions with no additional compensation.

4. PRIZES: GRAND PRIZE

One grand prize consisting of a trip for one (1) to the 1990 Photokina Trade Show in West Germany. The trip includes round-trip coach airfare for one (1) from the major airport nearest to the winner's home town to an international airport with connections to Cologne, West Germany. The winner will be met by a representative of 3M, the maker of Scotch videocassettes, and a representative of Video Magazine for a tour of the Photokina Trade Show. After the show there will be sightseeing of Cologne and other historic regions of West Germany. The prize also includes 7 days and 8 nights lodging in Cologne. Related expenses, such as ground transportation and meals, are the responsibility of 3M. The trip must be taken by October 3-4, 1990, or it will be forfeited. (Approximate retail value $3,500).

SECOND PRIZE

Up to $1,000, which must be used to purchase a camcorder (approximate retail value depends on model chosen); plus Video Magazine Jogging Suit (approximate retail value $30), sweatshirt (approximate retail value $16) and tote bag (approximate retail value $10).

THIRD PRIZE

Up to $400, which must be used to purchase a VCR (approximate retail value depends on model chosen); plus Video Magazine sweatshirt (approximate retail value $16) and tote bag (approximate retail value $10).

FOURTH PRIZE

Ten (10) Scotch Pro-Cam Videocassettes (approximate retail value $100); plus Video Magazine tote bag (approximate retail value $10).

5. Limit one prize per household. All prizes will be awarded. No transfer, substitutions or cash equivalents of prizes. All taxes on prizes are the responsibility of the winners.

6. Contest open only to residents of the U.S. who are age 21 or older. Employees of 3M, Video Magazine, their immediate families, affiliates and agencies are not eligible to enter. Void where prohibited or restricted by law.

7. For a list of major prize winners, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: Video Magazine/Scotch Videocassette Vacation Video Contest, 460 W. 34 St., New York, NY 10001.

For additional information, circle No. 79 on Reader Service Card.

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- Effective on all forms of copy-protection currently in use
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Our new technology which can lock to the oldest and noisiest of rental tapes. This innovative circuit will remained locked to the video signal even when the H & V sync are gone. No other product can claim that !

WARNING :
STI does not condone piracy !
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GOOD THINGS

continued from page 57

stereo to a videocassette as you shoot.

With Azden's WMS-PRO wireless camcorder microphone system ($250), you can pick up sound at a distance of more than 250 feet. A transmitter, a clip-on lapel mic and a handheld mic are included. Mitsubishi's tiny PRM-1 pen remote ($25) can be used to comfortably perform six basic functions on all recent Mitsubishi color televisions.

You can never go wrong with a good pair of headphones. Beyer Dynamic's DT990 ($209) boasts a frequency response that surpasses the limits of human hearing. Koss' JCK/300 headphones ($275) add the convenience of infrared wireless operation. Its unique transmitter design offers a variety of options for placement of the system's components.

Another surefire hit is blank tape. For the holiday season, TDK has four-packs of its high-grade EHF-120 VHS cassettes ($34), five-packs of HS-120 VHS blanks ($35) and two-packs of the MP-120 8mm tapes ($24). Standard discounts reduce these prices considerably. The VHS cassettes now come with head cleaners, and the 8mm set comes with a plastic library case.

Finally, we suggest you go where no shopper has gone before. Paramount has assembled the Complete *Star Trek* Video Library: all 79 episodes of the original TV series on a set of 79 VHS cassettes, priced at a cool $1,000. You'll live long and prosper this holiday season, at least until the bills come in. ■

YULE LOVE

continued from page 61

whom every woman would secretly like to date and whom every man would secretly like to be. He's the subject of not one but two triple-tape gift sets. The one from Turner Home Entertainment ($59.98) includes *Suspicion, The Bachelor and the Bobby Soxer* and *Gunga Din*—a nice combination of suspense, comedy and drama. Republic's boxed set costs three pennies less and includes Hitchcock's *Indiscreet, Father Goose* and *Operation Petticoat*, a World War II submarine yarn.

"I'll miss Sir Larry." Maybe, but don't miss Sir Laurence Olivier in the stream of video revivals his death has touched off. They even include a few gift-priced films like *Rebecca* (CBS/Fox, $19.98), a classic Olivier as well as Hitchcock's Hollywood debut.

"Young people don't know what good music is. When I was a kid, we listened to people like Judy Garland." Give this old fogey an MGM musical like *Meet Me in St. Louis*, a Garland classic with a Christmas angle. It's a steal at $19.95.

"When I was a kid, we listened to musicians like John Lennon and Paul McCartney." Give this young fogey a tape that will bring back those old memories. MPI's *Beatles '64* ($24.95), a memento of America's frenzied introduction to the Fab Four, should do the job nicely.

"Yes, we're settling in. There is life after New York. But I do miss the ballet." Lovers of dance need never miss the ballet again now that Kultur is selling nine $29.95 programs, including *The Bolshoi Swan Lake*, featuring the Soviet Union's Bolshoi Ballet. However, for a real Tech-

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nicolor eyeful, the prime pick is Michael Powell's classic *The Red Shoes* (Paramount, $14.95), with its show-stopping ballet about the shoes that can't stop dancing.

PLATTER UP

"Buying the disc player seemed like a good idea at the time, but it just seems to gather dust." It was a good idea and it's become an even better idea as videodisc releases have proliferated. The cream of film history is available on shiny platters, most of which cost $39.95 or less. Our pick of the season is Warner's two-disc *Empire of the Sun* ($39.98), which includes a supplementary documentary on Steven Spielberg's ambitious filming of J.G. Ballard's harrowing autobiographical novel.

"I've been slimed!" Who you gonna call? *Ghostbusters II* (RCA/Columbia, $24.95), starring Bill Murray and Dan Aykroyd as the high-tech exorcisers of evil spirits. Get out those unlicensed nuclear-particle accelerators!

Films often turn up on disc for a fraction of their cost on tape.

"I'd love a tape of "Rain Man"—but $89.95 is too steep for me." Perhaps. But what about MGM/UA's disc version for $24.95? Titles priced for tape rental are beyond the reach of most gift-givers and collectors, but those same titles often turn up on disc for a fraction of the cost. And it would be a shame to miss Dustin Hoffman in his memorable turn as an autistic adult.

"I hear the new tape transfer of "The Wizard of Oz" has digitally remastered sound. Too bad we're hearing it on an analog VCR." Disc viewers can enjoy the same transfer in a true digital playback medium called LaserVision for just $24.95, again from MGM/UA. And, as videophiles never tire of saying: Everything looks, as well as sounds, better on disc. ■

BERLIN

continued from page 74

based Nokia, which over the past few years has emerged as the third or fourth largest TV maker in Europe, showed a prototype of a radical one-button remote in which the function is controlled by the position of the remote unit.

ITT Semiconductors offered another one-button prototype. In one use, moving the control to the left or right moves the picture on the screen, so that a wide-screen movie can be scanned by a viewer on a standard TV screen. Other control functions can be exercised by calling up a menu on the screen and using the remote control like a computer mouse—by positioning a cursor then pushing the single button.

Here are a few other video innovations at Funkaustellung, some of which may find their way into U.S. stores:

- Small-screen color TV sets using LCD screens were displayed by a number of exhibitors, including Thomson, which showed a five-inch multistandard travel model. Thomson executives said a personal video version—incorporating a VHS recorder—could show up in the

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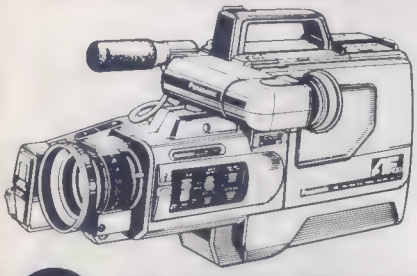

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U.S. under the RCA brand as early as next year.

• Philips showed a VHS deck with a three-inch LCD display mounted on the front panel. In addition to use as a monitor, the LCD screen serves as the display panel for programming, channel number, time and other recorder functions. Expect to see a U.S. version soon, probably in 1990.

• BASF may have fired up a new round in VCR recording time battles by introducing the longest-playing videotape yet. Designated E-300 in Europe, it provides five hours of recording time at the standard European video recording speed. Because of the difference in recording speeds, the same tape—when it's introduced here—will be called T-200 and will tape for three hours, 20 minutes at the SP speed and 10 full hours at the slower EP speed.

• Nokia demonstrated a developmental system that can slow down tape speed by a factor of three without noticeably degrading the picture. This would make it possible to store up to ten movies (15 hours) on a single European E-300 cassette. In American applications, the possibility exists of extending a single tape's recording time to 30 hours, although the developer said no tests using American standards have yet been conducted.

• Finally, the Swatch Watch concept is coming to TV. Blaupunkt used Funkaustellung to raise the curtain on Altro, a portable TV set tailored with mood changes in mind. Altro comes with a conventional front panel. But if a viewer grows bored with the look, he or she simply removes it and snaps on one designed to fit the moment. Initially, Altro will be offered with three additional panels—PC Board, Stripe and Graffiti. But Blaupunkt says more will be added as TV fashions and viewer fancies dictate. ■

David Lachenbruch is Editorial Director of Television Digest.

RECEIVERS

continued from page 78

channel. Along with two video inputs, the RX-701, priced at $540, has a seven-band computerized graphic equalizer with enough memory to store five customized tonal settings in addition to five at the factory.

Synthesized surround sound, powered entirely by a single 75-watt/channel stereo amplifier, is featured in Sharp's SA-R75AV receiver, for $430. Both this

matrix surround mode and what Sharp calls X-Bass low-frequency reinforcement offer two-position adjustment switches. To quickly attach an extra VCR or a camcorder, there's a front-panel A/V input that augments two rear-panel video connectors.

ECONOMY MODELS

Even in the bargain basement, at a price that once defined minimal stereo receivers, you'll find some well-equipped A/V system control centers these days. Technics' SA-R230, for $350, accepts two video sources in a standard rear-panel hookup. A third can be patched into the front. The SA-R230 operates in two-channel stereo only, with a rated power output of 50 watts for each channel, which is more than enough to handle most midsized systems.

In terms of the smallest investment required to bring home a hi-fi receiver with video in the picture, few candidates would ace out Vector Research's VRX-3600R, for $320. Its 40-watt/channel stereo amp is complemented by matrix surround circuitry that delivers rear sound via the receiver's "B" speaker outputs. Jacks are provided for two video sources as well as a separate A/V processing loop and a video monitor ouput.

Today's new breed of audio/videophiles may argue that separate components have subtle advantages, but first-hand experience with components such as these—even the least ambitious among them—demonstrates that a good A/V receiver can sharpen the fuzzy edges of a system's configuration while filling you with a sense of dollars well spent. ■

BATMAN

continued from page 86

put the $19.98 tape on moratorium after December 31, possibly as a prelude to releasing episodes of the TV series itself on cassette. Although CBS/Fox had no comment on this possibility, Joel Eisner, owner of the Science-Fiction and Horror Emporium in New York City and author of *The Official Batman Book*, believes "that has to be the explanation. They've had the TV episode releases in the works for months, and probably don't want confusion with the *Batman* movie to interfere."

With the Warner film, the CBS/Fox videos, the letterboxed *Batman* laserdisc due in January and unauthorized copies of Columbia's two *Batman* serials (*Batman* from 1943, and *Batman and Robin* from 1949) making it into some stores, a steady stream of Bat-merchandise will be driving video sales for the next few months. By then the sequel to the Tim Burton film, already in the works for next summer, will begin the hype all over again.

But Batman's most lasting effect, long after the T-shirts and other memorabilia are tossed out, may be on the video industry itself. "This kind of video release so soon after the theatrical run can only help sell-through," observed Steven Berns, president of RKO-Warner Video, a leading chain in the Northeast. "People like it when they can go get a video this close to the actual release of the movie, with the film still fresh in their minds. It boosts cassette sales higher than they would otherwise be. Warner also made a good decision based on what else is out there this Christmas. I hope it's a move that other studios will follow more often." ■

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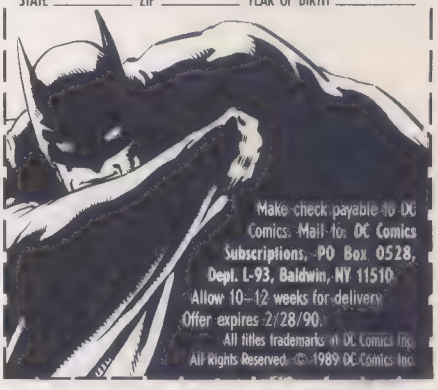

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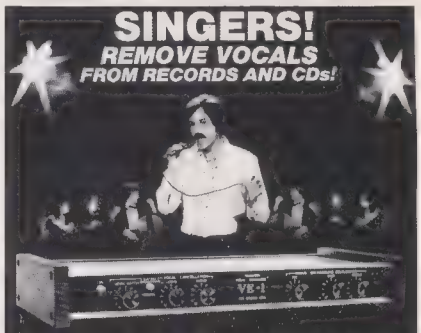

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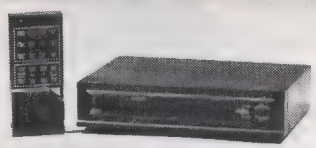

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VIDEO magazine

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S-VHS tape tests; 8 digital VCRs tested; high-band 8mm

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TECH TIPS

The sound of music

You can easily add music to homemade tapes while you edit without expensive dubbing equipment. Connect the mono audio output from a source deck (like a camcorder) to the left or right audio input on your stereo editing deck; connect an external music source to the other audio input. Use the music source's volume control to match the audio output level of the video source. Most audio cassette decks and CD players have pause buttons that will help you maintain continuity from one scene to another.

Russ Hval
Reddington Beach, Fla.

Cover story

VCR dust covers are a good idea because dust and dirt can easily settle inside the cabinet, contributing to tape dropouts and shortening a VCR's life. But don't slap the cover onto the VCR immediately after a lengthy taping session. Unless the cover has ventilation slits, heat from the VCR will be trapped inside and can even cause condensation to build up inside the deck. Give the VCR a half-hour or so to cool before tossing on the cover—your deck will repay you with improved performance and a longer, happier life. ■

Fading away

Does your camcorder lack a wipe feature? If so, you can achieve this effect manually. Attach a sheet of black paper to a mat board, then place your camcorder on a tripod. Put the board in front of, but not touching, the lens, then start shooting and slowly move the board laterally out of the picture. Reverse the process to wipe a shot in the other direction.

S. Caputo
Palm Harbor, Fla.

Adapter mishaps

Although they're convenient, plug-on RF adapters have been known to slip off and disconnect at the worst times (like when the cat runs behind the TV stand). Cable installers report that many "trouble calls" arise from loose cables. Screw-on adapters may require a little more effort, but they're more secure. ■

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MAIL-ORDER GUIDELINES

At VIDEO Magazine, we believe our readers should get what they order from our mail-order advertisers at the prices indicated and in a timely fashion. We stand behind that belief by taking steps to determine that an advertiser is reputable and reliable before accepting an advertisement. Additionally, if we learn that an advertiser engages in a regular pattern of unfair or improper business practices, we will deny that advertiser the opportunity to advertise.

Nonetheless, the responsibility for fair dealing ultimately lies with the advertisers themselves, and unfortunately VIDEO Magazine cannot guarantee their behavior. Therefore, we feel it is important for our readers to know what their rights are and to follow the tips set forth below for purchasing merchandise by mail. Further, we are prepared to use our best efforts to assist any customer who has been improperly or unfairly dealt with by one of our advertisers.

Our requirements for advertising in VIDEO Magazine and our offer of assistance to aggrieved purchasers do not in any way limit either the obligation of an advertiser to comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations or our customers' ability to enforce their rights under those laws.

MAIL-ORDER BILL OF RIGHTS

Under federal law, if you order advertised merchandise by mail, the advertiser must ship your order when promised in the advertisement—or, if no delivery date is promised, within 30 days of receiving your order. If the advertiser fails to ship your order in a timely fashion, you may cancel your order and are entitled to a prompt refund.

If the initial shipping date cannot be met, the advertiser must notify you in writing and give you the option of either cancelling your order and receiving a full refund or agreeing to a new shipping date.

If the new shipping date is *less* than 30 days after the original shipping date, the merchandise may be shipped to you unless you notify the advertiser in writing of your desire to cancel. If the new shipping date is *more* than 30 days after the original shipping date, or no new shipping date is provided, your order must be cancelled by the advertiser unless you inform the advertiser in writing that you still want the merchandise.

If the advertiser is unable to meet the new shipping date, the option process starts again—except that, regardless of the length of the second delay, the order must be cancelled unless you inform the advertiser in writing that you consent to the delay. If you accept an indefinite delay, you may change your mind at any time and so notify the advertiser in writing.

Note: The 30-day time period does not begin to run on a credit card sale until the advertiser charges your account. Also, these regulations do not apply to C.O.D. orders.

If your order is cancelled, a refund must be made within 7 days on cash purchases or within one billing cycle on credit card purchases.

You may keep any unordered merchandise sent to you; you need not pay for it or send it back. An advertiser who sends you a bill or otherwise attempts to collect any money from you for unordered merchandise is in violation of federal law.

Note: These regulations do not pertain to orders placed over the telephone and charged to a credit card.

SUGGESTIONS FOR MAIL-ORDER PURCHASERS

1. Read the ad carefully.

2. Whether you place your order by mail or by telephone, confirm the exact price (including any rebates) and any additional costs such as warranties, shipping, handling and insurance before you place your order.

3. Check with the advertiser regarding any warranties offered or available for purchase.

4. Check whether the advertiser has a return policy.

5. Keep a record of your order and all other transactions and get the names of all persons with whom you speak.

6. Never send cash. Pay by check or money order or with a credit card so you will have a record of your transaction. If you pay by credit card, you may have a greater measure of recourse in the event the advertiser does not perform. (Check the complaint procedures of your credit card companies.)

7. If you receive damaged or improper merchandise, contact the advertiser as soon as possible.

8. Get a receipt from the shipper whenever you return merchandise.

9. Since VIDEO Magazine will not continue to accept advertising from businesses that have engaged in a regular pattern of unfair or improper dealing with our readers, try to determine which have been long-standing advertisers

WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM

1. Allow 30 days for receipt of order or delay notification.

2. Contact the advertiser in writing, stating the merchandise ordered, the price and date of order, and the nature of your complaint. Include proof of payment (copy of cancelled check, showing both sides, credit card statement, etc.). Keep a copy for your records.

3. Allow two weeks for a response from the advertiser.

4. If your complaint is still not resolved, contact us *in writing* (no phone calls, please), enclosing copies of all correspondence and proof of payment along with an explanation of what has transpired.

Mail to:
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Advertiser Complaint Dept.
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001

Other organizations that can assist you if you have a problem.

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Mail Order Action Line
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New York, NY 10017

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Electret condenser zoom mic w/dual pattern set to the long position and it acts as a sound beam, letting you zoom in on your subject cutting out side noises. In the short position it acts like a wide-angle mic.

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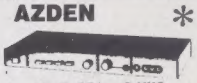
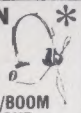


Audio/Video S-VHS switcher w/ audio mixer
4 in/2 out a/V source selector • 2 SVHS input & output terminals • Audio mix control for adding narration or music while dubbing
AVS20 **PLEASE CALL**

AZDEN ✻ **VIDEO PRO**



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Add Narration As You're Taping • Monitor Camcorder Audio
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VDM-200 **$239.95**

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SOUNDS RIGHT
Audio mixer—combines up to 3 sources of sound at same time, stereo or mono. Audio/video fade. Includes microphone ✻

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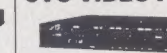
CHARACTER GENERATOR 12 types of titles/styles. 64 colors super-imposed over video
GRAPHIC GENERATOR Birthday cake, Christmas, TV set, Keyhole, others. 22 total
SPECIAL EFFECTS GENERATOR 17 types of fades/wipes • 3 speeds • 64 colors
PRO ED NOW AVAILABLE

SONY VIDEO PROCESSORS



XV-T500 Digital video superimposer. Provides 8 colors for characters, outlining, and shading, audio mixing function, and reverse image function.
XV-D300 Digital effector includes field memory device with zoom, multi-strobe, and special art effects.
XV-C700 Multi-color corrector with joystick, negative/positive conversion for film to video transfer. Audio/video fade. 8-color generator, 15 wipe patterns.

JVC VIDEO PROCESSORS

Please Call

JX-C7 Video Corrector with joystick. Includes enhance, audio/video fade, video stabilizer, stereo audio input/output jacks for Hi-Fi VCR's.
JXS-V55 Video Editing Processor with 16 wipe patterns, 8 colors, color balance with joystick, enhance, audio/video fade, audio mixing and more. SVHS

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SPECIAL EFFECTS GENERATOR

FADES AND WIPES
CALL FOR DETAILS

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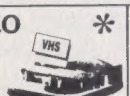

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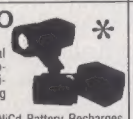

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OFF THE AIR

The video revolution no one expected

BY TED KOPPEL

Last spring, Daniel Ortega, the president of Nicaragua, was denied a visa to come and speak in the United States. Friends of the Sandinista government in this country took matters into their own hands. At a bar in Boston, at a union hall in San Francisco, at a church in Concord, New Hampshire, and at 32 other sites around the country, they prepared for a broadcast from Managua.

For $3,500 they rented a studio, a crew and a ground station in Managua. For $3,700, they rented a satellite for 45 minutes. On a conference call hookup, members of the audience could talk to Ortega. The audiences were not huge, but Ortega got to speak in the U.S.—without a visa.

The world is in the early stages of a revolution it has hardly begun to understand. We think we know something about the impact of television because it's been with us for 50 years, but recently, television has begun falling into the hands of the people. It trickles across national boundaries; it leaps from one continent to another. There is no longer any country so remote or isolated that its people, at one time or another, are not touched by a television image from the other side of the world. Where once political documents were smuggled across borders and passed secretly from hand to hand, now underground production teams, from Africa to eastern Europe, are unleashing revolution in a box.

In communist Hungary they call it "Black Box," homemade videos showing, among other things, scenes of banned demonstrations. In neighboring Czechoslovakia, activist producers mix flashy graphics with MTV-style production to draw attention to their *Video Journal*. And with at least 250,000 VCRs in Czechoslovakia, that's where *Video Journal* finds its audience. One recent edition satirized the low quality of Czech products by singing the praises of the Czech state airlines' air-sickness bags. Another edition captured on a home camcorder a clandestine meeting between Czech and Polish dissidents.

PHOTO: STAN PINKWAS

Ted Koppel anchors ABC's Nightline. *This article, reprinted with permission, is adapted from* The Koppel Report: Television: Revolution in a Box, *which aired Sept. 13, 1989, 10 p.m. EST, on the ABC Television Network.*

Footage, made with a camcorder at the national university of Chile, of a woman allegedly shot by Chilean police, becomes part of a monthly magazine called *Teleanalysis*, opposing the rule of Chilean dictator Augosto Pinochet. The program is distributed to 300 subscribers, churches and human rights organizations. Each cassette is copied, then copied again, until eventually, its producers claim, it reaches an audience of 40,000 to 50,000 a month. It undermines what every dictatorship requires: silence.

Nowhere has television won a more significant victory against greater odds than in Poland. Only eight years ago, Solidarity—which now controls the government—appeared to be dead, crushed. The union was outlawed, any mention of it banned from Polish state TV. The leadership had been arrested, or driven underground. And it was underground that they prepared alternative sources of information. Although one VCR could cost the equivalent of the average Pole's annual salary, five or ten people would split the cost: 38 million Poles, 3 million VCRs.

Exiled Poles began a production house in Paris. They smuggled tapes of martial law repression out of Poland to Western news agencies, and tapes about what was happening in the West back in again. The tapes were copied again and again at underground production facilities like one in an annex to a church in Gdansk. By last September, the Paris group was ready to leap a new technological hurdle: Poles have bought at least 10,000 private satellite dishes, bringing Western news and entertainment directly into their homes.

Now Solidarity controls Poland's new government. It has compromised with the Communists by letting them retain control of important posts like defense and interior, but state radio and television are about to pass into Solidarity's hands. That, their spokesman told us, is 100 percent certain. ■

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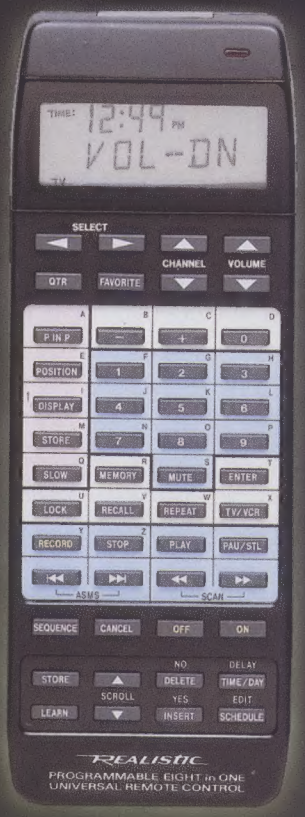

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